Oct. 8, 1990

THE NEW YORKER

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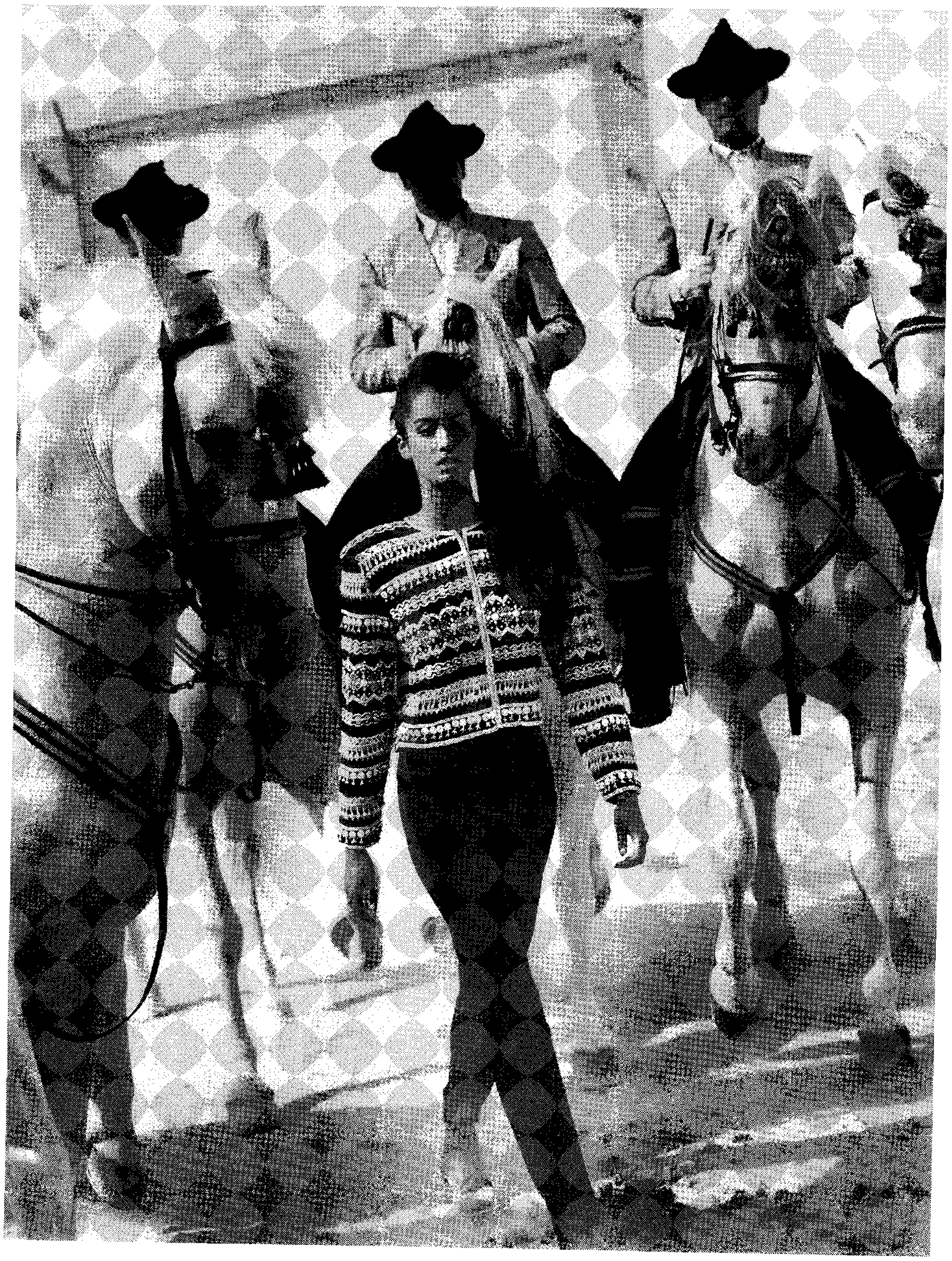

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THE NEW YORKER
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THE NEW YORKER (ISSN 0028-792X), published weekly by The New Yorker Magazine, Inc., 25 W. 43rd St., N.Y., N.Y. 10036; Steven T. Florio, president and chief executive officer; Stuart H. Jason, vice-president and treasurer; Ruth A. Diem, vice-president and human resources director; Frank Mustacato, vice-president and circulation director; Virginia L. Jespersen, vice-president and general manager; Lynn Guthrie Heiler, vice-president and advertising director; Matthew D. Roberts, vice-president and marketing director; Pamela H. Older, vice-president and director of manufacturing. Branch advertising offices: 111 East Wacker Drive, Chicago, Ill. 60601; 41 Osgood Place, San Francisco, Calif. 94133; Suite 1460, 5900 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90036; 67½ Chestnut St., Boston, Mass. 02108; 19 South Audley St., London, W1Y 5DN. Metropolitan Publishers Representatives: 3017 Piedmont Road, NE, Atlanta, Ga. 30305; 2500 So. Dixie Highway, Miami, Fla. 33133; 3016 Mason Place, Tampa, Fla. 33629; 3 Church St., Suite 503, Toronto, Canada. M5E 1M2. Carol Orr & Co., Publishers Representative: 3300 Oak Lawn, Suite 500, Dallas, Tx. 75219. Vol. LXVI, No. 34, October 8, 1990. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. Authorized as second-class mail by the Post Office Department, Ottawa, Canada, and for payment of postage in cash.
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Printed in U.S.A. Subscription rates: In U.S. and possessions, one year, $32.00; two years, $52.00. In Canada, one year, $50.00. Other foreign, one year, $56.00, payable in advance.
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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According to a press release that recently came in the mail, "twelve of New York's most powerful defense attorneys" will soon be starring in a production of "Twelve Angry Men." They are Martin B. Adelman, William I. Aronwald, Lawrence S. Goldman, Jack Hoffinger, Michael Kennedy, Gerald Labush, Jack Litman, Robert G. Morvillo, Gustave Newman, Murray Richman, Robert Fogelnest, and Luther Williams. The press release—which on the whole wasn't shy about linking the attorneys' names with their most famous cases—goes on to say that all are making their legitimate-theatre débuts.

When news of this production broke, the first thing we did was ring up Keith Sherman & Associates to find out who would be playing whom. Chris Day, who was kind enough to put things in terms of the 1957 movie version that Sydney Lumet directed, based on Reginald Rose's teleplay, told us that Mr. Adelman ("Michael Stewart case") would be playing John Fiedler, Mr. Litman ("Robert Chambers' attorney") would be playing Lee J. Cobb, Murray Richman ("Labor Secretary Donovan case") would be playing Jack Warden, Mr. Aronwald ("Michael Burnett case") would be playing Edward Binns, Mr. Hoffinger ("Carl Andre's attorney") would be playing Joseph Sweeney, Mr. Morvillo ("John Zaccaro's attorney") would be playing Martin Balsam, Mr. Fogelnest ("'Pizza Connection' racketeering case") would be playing E. G. Marshall, and Mr. Newman ("Congressman Flake's attorney") would be playing Robert Webber. As for Mr. Labush and Mr. Williams (whose previous courtroom experience the press release didn't mention), they would be playing Jack Klugman and George Voskovec. The Ed Begley role would be played by Mr. Goldman ("Ethics Committee chair, N.A.C.D.L.") and the Henry Fonda role by Mr. Kennedy ("Ivana Trump's attorney").

The play—which is directed by Toni Kotite and produced by the New York State Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (to raise money for legal scholarships)—will have two performances only (October 26 and 27 at 8), at the N.Y.U. School of Law (40 Washington Square South). Tickets, which are fifty dollars, are tax-deductible and get you invited to "a post-performance reception with the show's stars." Bring your cards and résumés.

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)

About Time and **Handy Dandy**—James Whitmore and Audra Lindley in two plays in repertory. The first is by Tom Cole and the second by William Gibson. "About Time" is in previews Oct. 2-7; it opens Oct. 9 at 6:45. "Handy Dandy" is in previews. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.)

Abundance—Beth Henley's latest work, which is set in nineteenth-century Wyoming. Tess Harper, Amanda Plummer, Lanny Flaherty, Keith Reddin, and Michael Rooker make up the cast. Previews begin Oct. 4. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)

Circle Repertory Company—The first production of the season is **THE COLORADO CATECHISM**, a two-character play by Vincent J. Cardinal. With Becky Ann Baker and Kevin James O'Connor. Previews begin Oct. 3. (99 Seventh Ave. S. 924-7100.)

Happy Days—Charlotte Rae and Bill Moor in Beckett's play. Previews Oct. 2-9. Opens Oct. 10 at 8. (CSC, 136 E. 13th St. 677-4210.)

Machinal—A revival of Sophie Treadwell's 1928 play, which was directed by Michael Greif. In previews. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

Michael Feinstein in Concert: Piano and Voice—Mr. Feinstein in a limited engagement that opens Oct. 2 at 8, and runs through Oct. 27. (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

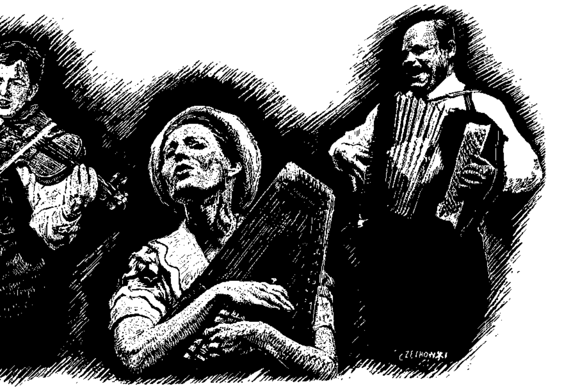
The Miser—Philip Bosco, Carole Shelley, and Mia Dillon have the leads in Molière's comedy. Directed by Stephen Porter. In previews. (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.)

Oh, Kay!—David Merrick's new production of the Gershwins' 1926 musical comedy. The setting has been moved from Long Island to Harlem, and James Racheff has written a new book, based on the original by Guy Bolton and P. G. Wodehouse. Angela Teek and Brian Mitchell lead the large cast; Dan Siretta directed. In previews. (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211.)

Once on This Island—A musical by Lynn Ahrens (book and lyrics) and Stephen Flaherty (score), which is based on Rosa Guy's 1985 novel, "My Love, My Love." Seen last spring at Playwrights Horizons, the show has moved to Broadway. In previews. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Stand-Up Tragedy—Jack Coleman and Marcus Chong in a play by Bill Cain. Previews through Oct. 3. Opens Oct. 4 at 6:45. (Criterion Center Stage Right, Broadway at 45th St. 239-6200.)

The Sum of Us—Tony Goldwyn and Richard Venture star in this play by David Stevens. Previews begin Oct. 5. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020.)



Robert Olsen, Linda Kerns, and Kevin Chamberlain in "Smoke on the Mountain"

RECENTLY OPENED

Aspects of Love—Andrew Lloyd Webber's latest extravaganza, based on David Garnett's frail 1955 novel of the same title, aspires to good taste and sophistication (it's about artists and theatre folk rather than cats or trains) but ends up being a monument to vulgarity. The combination of Garnett's triviality and Lloyd Webber's pretentiousness produces something so empty it implodes. (Reviewed in our issue of 4/23/90.) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

By and for Havel—A pair of one-acters in revival. "By"—**AUDIENCE**—is based on an episode that occurred when Václav Havel had a menial job in a brewery; "for"—**CATASTROPHE**—is Samuel Beckett's poetic tribute to Havel when he was in prison. Together, they make an evening that is both comic and stirring. With Kevin O'Connor and Lou Brockway. (3/19/90) (John Houseman Studio Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.)

Camille, A Tearjerker—A revival of Char[illegible] Ludlam's 1973 play. With Everett Quinton (who also directed), Georg Osterman, and Eureka. (Charles Ludlam Theatre, 1 Sheridan Square. 691-2271.)

Falsettoland—This latest installment of a three-part cantata by William Finn (music and lyrics) is a sequel to "In Trousers" and "March of the Falsettos." Mr. Finn's story presents a number of new elements (among them a bar mitzvah in the hospital room of a man who is dying of AIDS) before dissolving in its own syrup. The music sounds agreeable enough, and the performance goes smoothly, under the direction of James Lapine. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782.)

Forever Plaid—Stuart Ross's loving, tongue-in-cheek salute to the "guy groups" of the fifties is a real treat. The performances of Jason Graae, Stan Chandler, David Engel, and Guy Stroman (as the Plaids, a close-harmony group snuffed out in the prime of life and brought back to earth for a single evening) are so deadpan, and the songs (arranged by James Raitt) are rendered at such a heightened pitch of musical good faith, that only from Ross's script and choreography would you know the thing is a parody. Bring your mom. Hell, bring the whole family. (Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400.)

Further Mo'—This lively, touching, and brilliantly performed small-scale musical, set in a New Orleans vaudeville theatre in 1927, is a real gem. Written by Vernel Bagneris (who also stars), it uses blues singing (mostly quite recherché songs) to say something about the plight of the black entertainer in American history and culture. (Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 475-5120.)

Hosanna—A revival of Michel Tremblay's 1973 play. (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 691-6226.)

It's Still My Turn—Terry Sweeney portrays Nancy Reagan in this one-man show. (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 691-6226.)

Lettice & Lovage—The marvellous Maggie Smith plays Lettice Douffet, a freewheeling guide to England's stately homes, and the elegant Margaret Tyzack plays a reprimanding envoy sent by Lettice's employers in Peter Shaffer's merry comedy about an unlikely friendship and other matters. Paxton Whitehead and Bette Henritze are effective in supporting roles. Michael Blakemore was the director. (4/9/90) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

Men of Manhattan—T. L. Reilly and Richard Skipper in a play by John Glines. (Courtyard Playhouse, 39 Grove St. 869-3530.)

Misalliance—Shaw's comedy, presented by Jean Cocteau Repertory. (Bouwerie Lane Theat[illegible] 330 Bowery, at Bond St. 67[illegible] 0060.)

The Piano Lesson—August Wilson's newest drama, the fourth in his series chronicling the black-American experience in the twentieth century, is set in Pittsburgh in 1936. In its exquisite writing and over-all structure (involving the conflict over a piano that figures hauntingly and intricately in one family's history) the play resembles "Joe Turner's Come and Gone" more than "Fences." Wilson takes refuge in an overly mystical and melodramatic ending, but there are some great scenes—even if the subtle ensemble acting in Lloyd Richards' production is thrown out of balance by an excessive performance by Charles S. Dutton. (4/30/90) (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 582-4022.)

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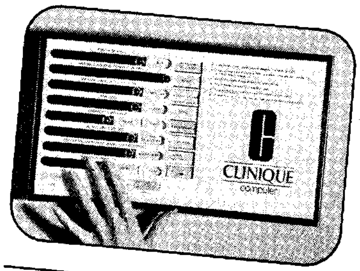

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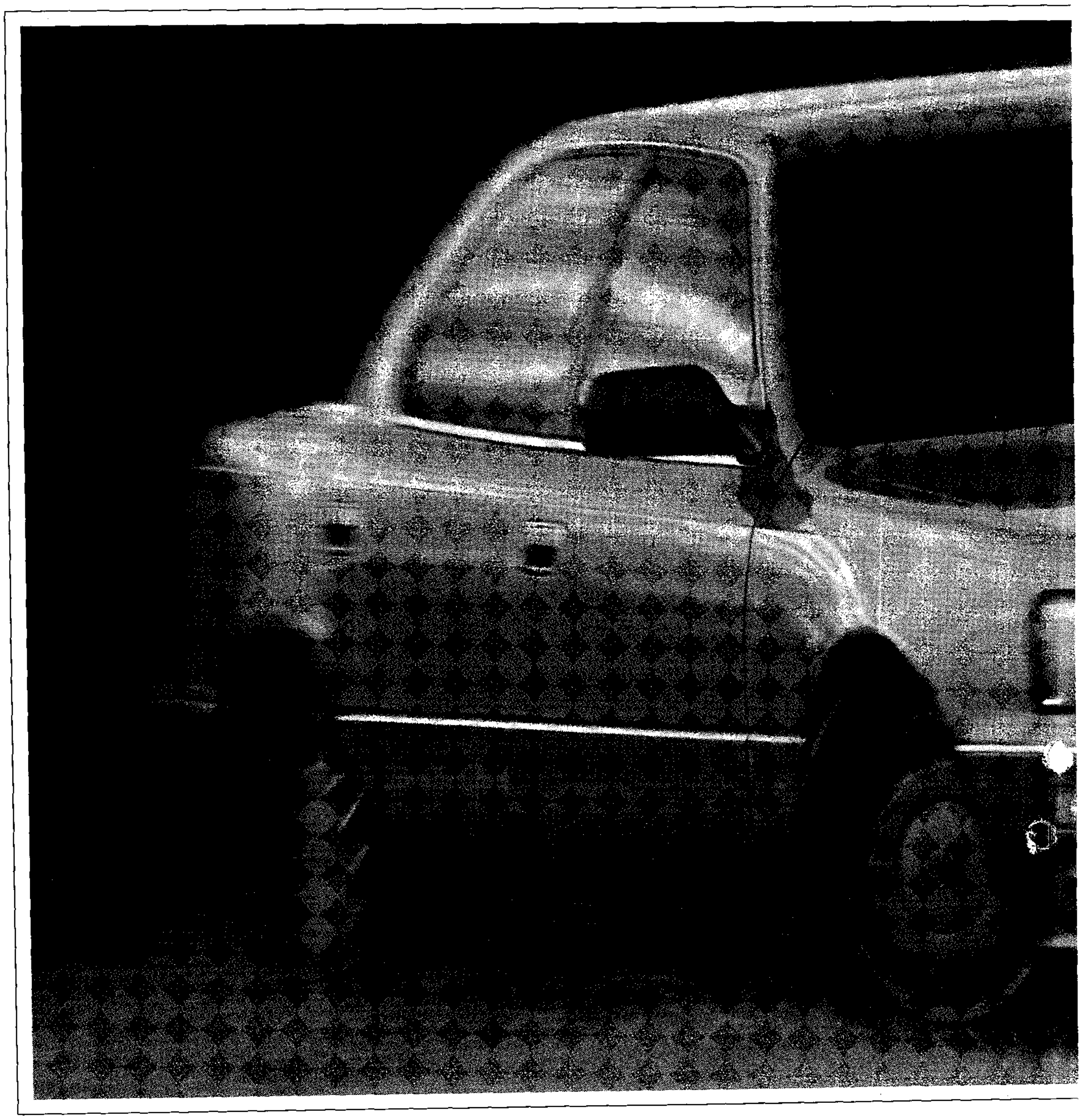

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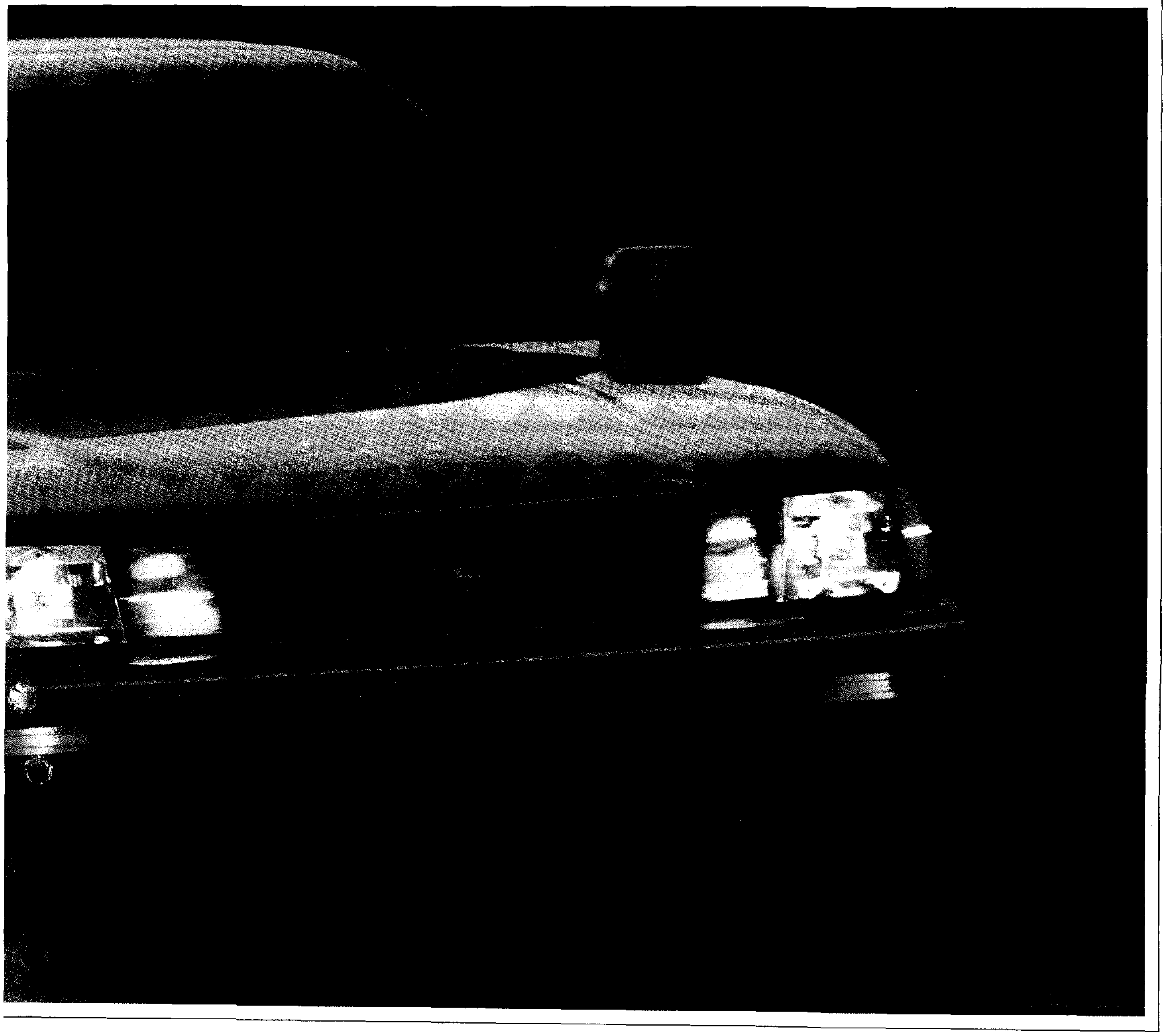

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THE THEATRE—Cont'd

Prelude to a Kiss—Craig Lucas's entertaining romantic comedy slips into fantasy when an old man kisses a bride at her wedding. Barnard Hughes is the old man, Mary-Louise Parker is the bride, and John Dossett is the groom. (3/26/90) (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450.)

The Rothschilds—A revival of the 1970 musical by Jerry Bock (score), Sheldon Harnick (lyrics), and Sherman Yellen (book), with a sixteen-member cast led by Mike Burstyn. (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330.)

Six Degrees of Separation—You're best off knowing nothing about the new John Guare play, other than that it represents a perfect meeting of the playwright and the director, Jerry Zaks. Out of a true story—one apparently about celebrity and Good Samaritanism—Guare has fashioned a wistful comedy about race, class, money, imagination, collective conscience, individual psyche, and the impulse toward art. What more do you want? With Swoosie Kurtz and Courtney B. Vance. (6/25/90) (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

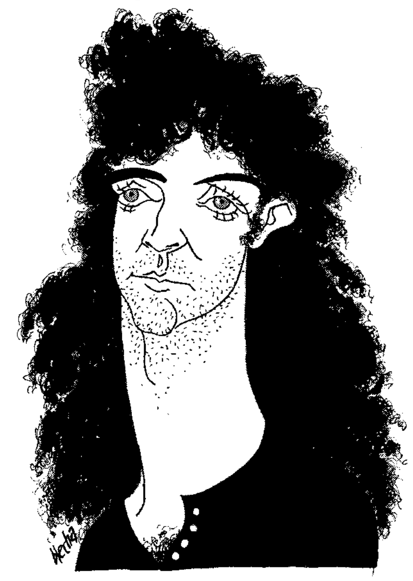
Smoke on the Mountain—This loving satire of old-time gospel music, set in 1938, is perfectly delightful. Written by Connie Ray (who also performs, along with six other versatile actor-musicians), it re-creates a Saturday-night service at a small church in rural North Carolina, where a family of more or less devout gospel singers have been invited to appear. (Lambs Theatre, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.)

Through the Leaves—A revival of a 1984 production of a play by Franz Xaver Kroetz. With Ruth Maleczech and Frederick Neumann. The director was JoAnne Akalaitis. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Closes Oct. 14.)

Young Playwrights Festival—Presenting "Hey Little Walter," by Carla D. Alleyne; "Believing," by Allison Birch; "Mutterschaft," by Gregory Clayman; and "Psychoneurotic Phantasies," by Gilbert Feke. The scripts were submitted before the dramatists' eighteenth birthdays, and there are bright indications in all of them. In Mr. Clayman's funny "Mutterschaft," indications are the least of it. The actors, most of whom will never see eighteen again, are splendid in every instance. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Closes Oct. 6.)

LONG RUNS

black and blue: An evening of classic blues and jazz, conceived, designed, and directed by Claudio Segovia and Héctor Orezzoli, who created "Tango Argentino" in a similarly commemorative but far less visually opulent style. Musicians of renown have been assembled, and while La Vern Baker, Linda Hopkins, and Carrie Smith sing, a troupe of hoofers young and old give the tap-dance subculture a workout. (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 246-0102.) . . . **cats:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to John Napier's sets and costumes. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200.) . . . **city of angels:** Larry Gelbart, dramatist; Cy Coleman, composer; Billy Byers, arranger; James Naughton and Gregg Edelman, leading men; and Michael Blakemore, director, are all in top form in this sharp, jokey musical satire about Hollywood in the forties. The plot concerns the making of a private-eye movie (and the unmaking of its author). The spectacular setting and costumes were designed by Robin Wagner and Florence Klotz and lighted by Paul Gallo. (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 246-0102.) . . . **the fantasticks:** The longest-running long run celebrated its thirtieth birthday last May. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.) . . . **a few good men:** "Mister Roberts" meets "The Mary Tyler Moore Show." Aaron Sorkin's military-courtroom drama treats issues such as justice, honor, loyalty, and morality with the slick, facile smugness of a half-hour comedy series. Directed by Don Scardino. (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.) . . . **forbidden broadway 1990:** A source of continual merriment, this revue is a cluster of parodies of shows along the Great White Way. Gerard Alessandrini conceived and directed it, and wrote the witty, barbed lyrics. (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.) . . . **grand hotel:** The dazzling imagination of Tommy Tune's direction and choreography and the dazzling scenery by Tony Walton almost make up for the inner vacancy of this show, but not quite. The story and characters are skimpy and the music is undistinguished. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-0102.) . . . **gypsy:** This revival of the great Sondheim-Styne-Laurents-Robbins musical (directed by Arthur Laurents himself) is so delightful—and the cast so engaging—that we think anyone would be happier for having seen it. One suggestion: don't applaud when Mama Rose comes down the aisle (you'll drown out the first number). With Linda Lavin. (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 246-0102.) . . . **les misérables:** The stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200.) . . . **nunsense:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.) . . . **other people's money:** Jerry Sterner's comedy about a New York corporate raider's attempt to take over a decorous New England business maintains its suspense from beginning to end. With Steven Keats and Priscilla Lopez. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.) . . . **the phantom of the opera:** This much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets (by Maria Björnson), everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)



Mark Morris at BAM

DANCE

THE oldest ballet company in the world comes to New York this week. Its stars are also the most carefully trained and lovingly nurtured classical stylists you are likely to see all year. They are the stallions of the Spanish Riding School of Vienna, making a limited United States tour this fall for the first time since 1982 (including a stop on October 4-7 at the Nassau Coliseum). A classical enthusiast cannot look at these horses going through their paces without rolling into pig heaven. You haven't seen the act of prancing until you've seen these stallions prance to Mozart and Chopin, with each foreleg fully straightening the instant the unshod hoof touches the ground. You haven't seen a soubresaut until you've seen these creatures rear up on their hind legs and surge forward on the beat of a march or a galop, without breaking the continuity of the musical phrase.

The choreography for the Lipizzaners—interlinking geometrical figures and weaving cursive patterns—goes back to the eighteenth century. Much of it celebrates symmetry, yet the fascinated spectator, watching a pair of horses and their riders as they mirror each other's movements, is led to think of them not as identical images but rather as individuals in momentary agreement. Minute differences between the pairs become magnified, and their action in common underscores how uncommon each horse is. At these moments, to be classical seems a tactful way of being free.

We caught up with the Lipizzaners during their Philadelphia stop, last month. In the course of the program, the master of ceremonies stated that everything we saw the horses perform was rooted in actions that horses naturally do from time to time. We wondered about this for such steps as the capriole, a stallion's grand jeté, originally developed to help cavalry clear out the space around them on the battlefield. In this maneuver, the horse leaps into the air on a musical count, taking all four legs off the ground in an explosive show of strength and courage. Midway through the evening, a couple of horse breeders slipped into the seats next to us. When they saw the stallions kick up their heels in this manner, one breeder turned excitedly to the other and said, "Hey, our horses do that and we don't even have to train 'em!"

Martha Graham Dance Company—A one-week engagement. Oct. 2 at 8: A benefit performance. "Steps in the Street" (from "Chronicle"), "Errand Into the Maze," "Ritual to the Sun" (from "Acts of Light"), and "Maple Leaf Rag" (première). . . . ¶ Oct. 3 at 8: "Seraphic Dialogue," "Steps in the Street," "Errand Into the Maze," and "Acts of Light." . . . ¶ Oct. 4 at 8: "Night Chant," "Hérodiade," "Errand Into the Maze," and "Maple Leaf Rag." . . . ¶ Oct. 5 at 8: "Steps in the Street," "Errand Into the Maze," "Night Journey," and "Acts of Light." . . . ¶ Oct. 6 at 2: "Temptations of the Moon," "Steps in the Street," "Hérodiade," and "Maple Leaf Rag." . . . ¶ Oct. 6 at 8: "Seraphic Dialogue," "Night Journey," and "Maple Leaf Rag." . . . ¶ Oct. 7 at 2: "Night Chant," "Hérodiade," "Errand Into the Maze," and "Maple Leaf Rag." . . . ¶ Oct. 7 at 7:30: "Seraphic Dialogue," "Steps in the Street," "Hérodiade," and "Acts of Light." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)

Monnaie Dance Group/Mark Morris—Presenting two programs at the Next Wave Festival Oct. 6 at 7 and Oct. 9 at 8: The New York première of "L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato," an evening-length work. . . . ¶ Oct. 7 at 7 and Oct. 10 at 7:30: "New Love Song Waltzes" and the New York premiè[illegible] of "Wonderland" and "Love Song Waltzes." (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. Through Oct. 14.)

Cumbre Flamenca—Final performances of the engagement. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Oct. 2-6 at 8 and Oct. 7 at 2 and 7:30.)

David Gordon/Pick Up Company—In reconstructed versions of "Framework" and "T.V. Reel." (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Oct. 2-6 at 8 and Oct. 7 at 3.)

Ballet Folklorico de Mexico—A sixty-five-member troupe of dancers and musicians. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Oct. 8 at 8.)

Classical Dance Company of Cambodia—Opening performances of a one-week engagement that will run through Oct. 14. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Oct. 9-10 at 8.)

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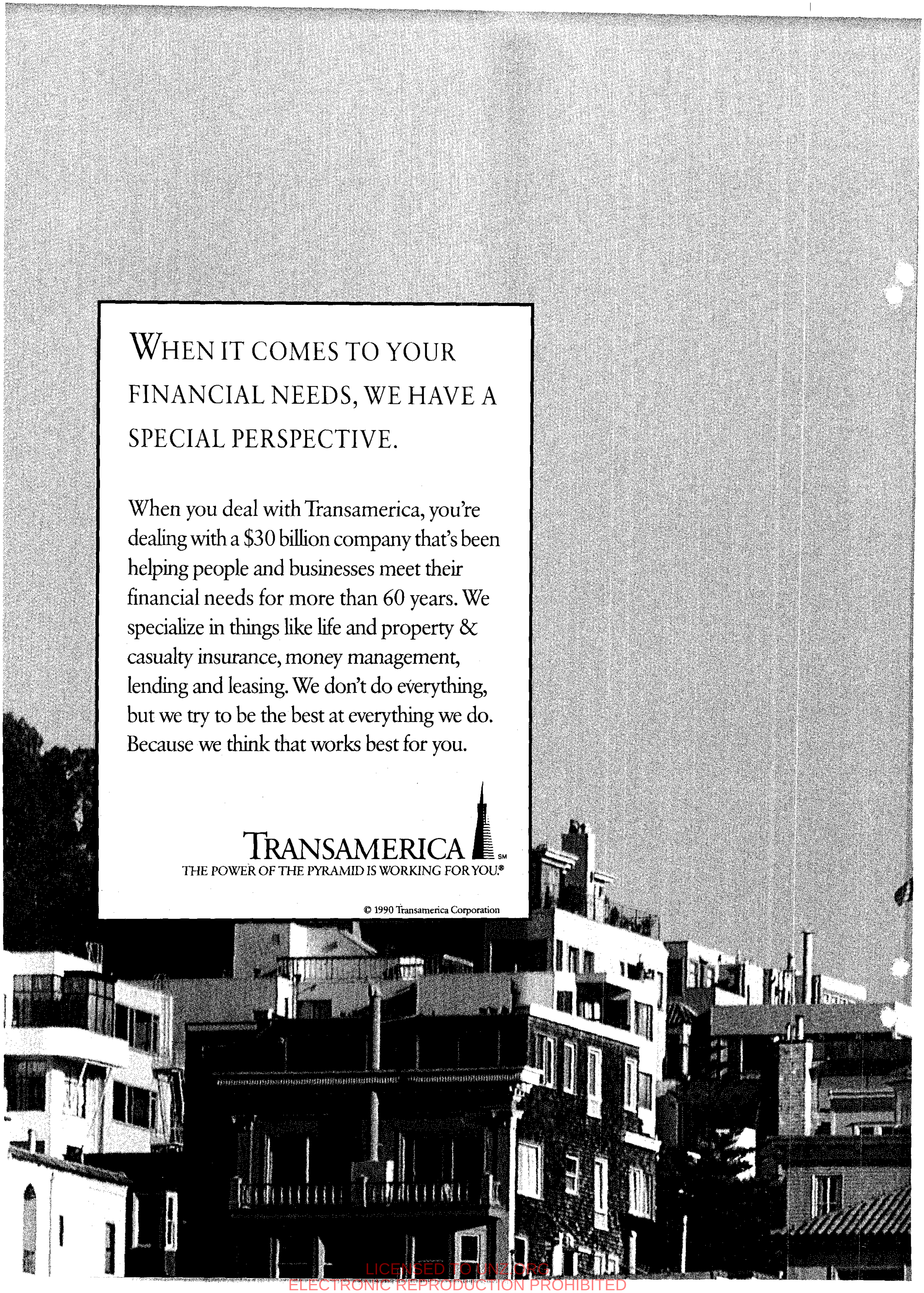

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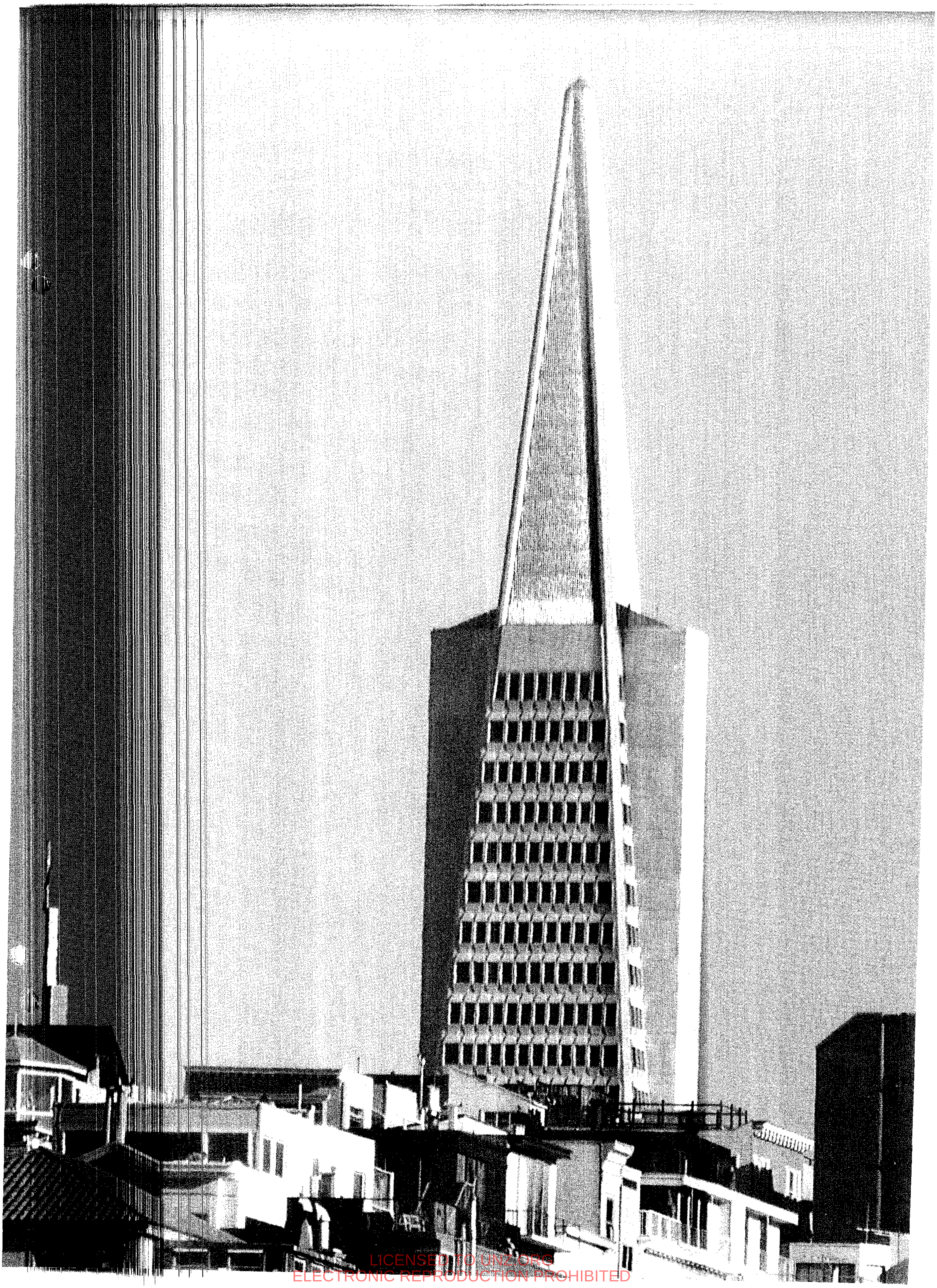

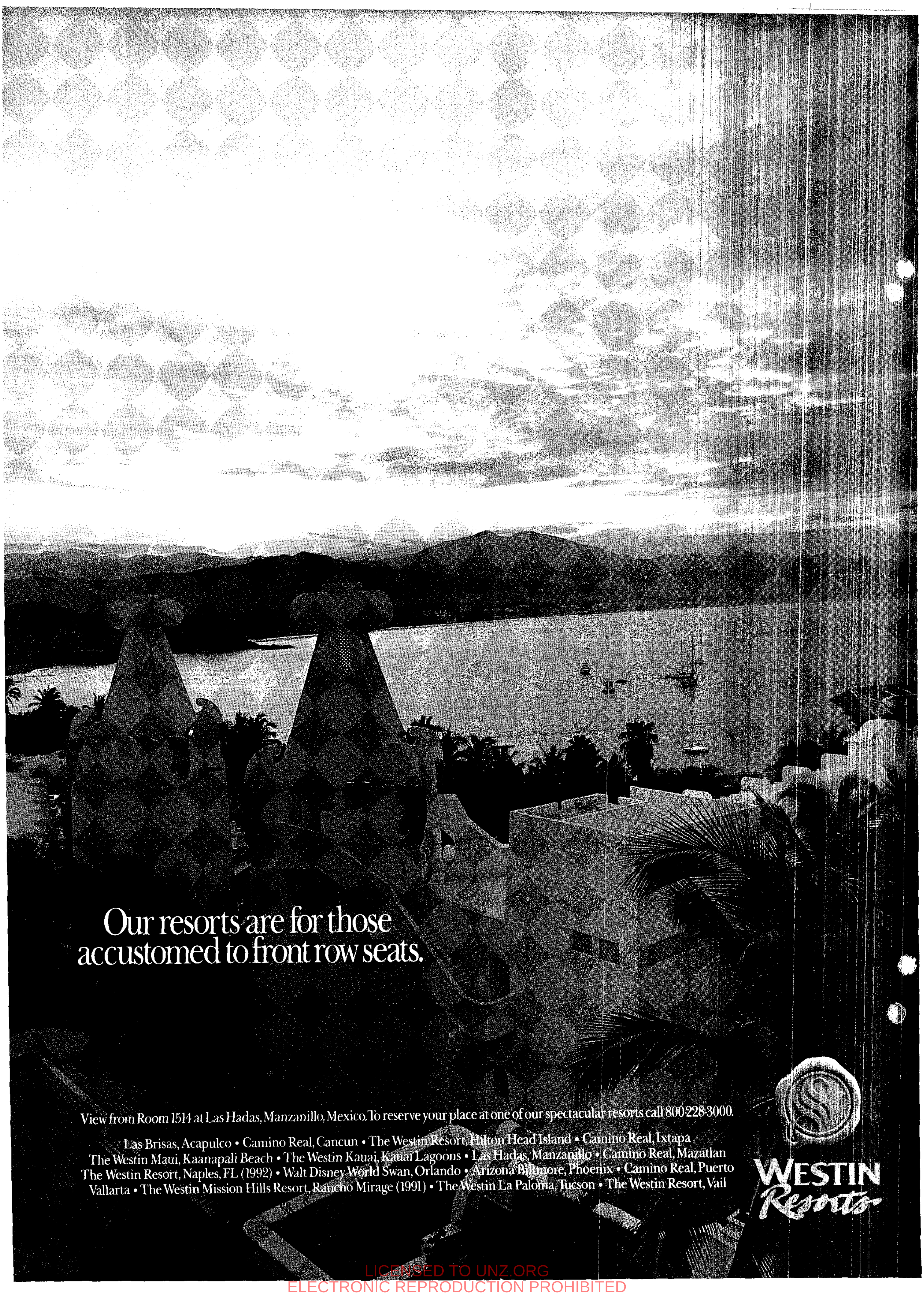
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NIGHT LIFE

IF you're ambivalent about David Baerwald, it's probably because you think he tilts toward John Cougar Mellencamp and all that overly heartfelt Heartland rock. If you're fond of him—as we are—you'll think his solo dêbut, "Bedtime Stories," is a dark, literate, restless album that would make perfect driving music if only you had a car. Baerwald, who will be at the Marquee on October 10, was one half of David + David—an L.A. duo that managed to get out a fine album, entitled "Boomtown," before collapsing under the weight of its own unexpected success. (The other David, David Ricketts, co-wrote a couple of songs on "Bedtime Stories.") Baerwald's music falls into the only-rock-and-roll-but-I-like-it category: faultlessly constructed, cleanly recorded, at times thoughtful and at times brutal. There are an awful lot of songwriters vying for poet laureate of America's lovelorn drifters, of course. What's nice about Baerwald is that—like the John Hiatt of a few years back—he treats his characters with respect and doesn't ask them to symbolize anything larger than their own lives. In the end, though, all those lives add up to a pretty troubling picture. Don't play "Bedtime Stories" at night, because you'll never get to sleep.

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A tony cabaret attained by passing through an opulent tapas restaurant, where wicker baskets overflow with fruit and vegetables and a row of Serrano hams hangs over the bar; if you haven't had dinner, you may never make it to the show. **BETTY,** a three-woman singing group that garnered rave notices during a recent stand here, is on hand for the next few weeks. Their shows move at an amphetamine pace and have something for everyone—performance art, cabaret, satirical funk, stand-up comedy. Not to mention their own "Betty Rules" T-shirts. Shows Tuesdays through Fridays at nine, Saturdays at nine and eleven-thirty.

Birdland, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—The jazz personnel turns over nearly every night at this airy, loftlike restaurant-bar in the gray zone between Zabar's and Columbia. Some may cry gentrification at the sight of the pastel walls, the potted greenery, and the bar crowded with Frascati sippers, but the floor-to-ceiling windows make for some fine Broadway-viewing. Trombonist **AL GREY,** a longtime star soloist in Count Basie's band, heads up a quintet Oct. 5-6. Music from nine Sundays through Thursdays, and from nine-thirty Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—"I'm sorry, but these are four-person tables and you're a party of three." "Could we take a two-person table and just add a chair?" "No, I'm afraid not, but maybe I can hook you up with a nice party of five." **LARRY GATLIN AND THE GATLIN BROTHERS** perform Oct. 2; the **DESERT ROSE BAND** comes in Oct. 3; and Oct. 4-5 belong to drummer **BILL BRUFORD'S EARTHWORKS.** On Oct. 8, a songwriters' showcase—one in a series of such events here—will feature **TERRE ROCHE** and **KATY MOFFATT,** among others. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven (Oct. 8 at seven-thirty and ten-thirty), and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Burgers, fries, and other things to make your heart beat faster.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A neighborhood bar where, if your neighbors coöperate, you can hear the beautiful, singular sound of musicians thinking. A trio led by pianist **HANK JONES** will be in swing through Oct. 6, and the **MARK WHITFIELD** trio begins work Oct. 8. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug, windowless enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters, wraparound Vertès murals, and **MONTGOMERY, PLANT & STRITCH,** a light, cool, breezily swinging trio that was formed in Houston in 1983. To American-songdom standards—as well as more recent stuff—the group brings a smart, delicately wrought style that suggests the influence of, among other things, fifties radio ads and sixties movie music. Sets at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in the Bemelmans' Bar, **RONNY WHYTE** presides at the piano from nine-forty-five Tuesdays through Saturdays.

Cat Club, 76 E. 13th St. (505-0090)—Every Sunday night, this club, usually dominated by metalheads, is ceded to a gang of Lindy Hop enthusiasts called the New York Swing Dance Society. An older couple glides across the floor at an easy pace; an eager young man, his tie loosened, his face perspiring, throws his date around like a crazed cossack. The **JORGE ANDERS** big band is in charge of things Oct. 7. Music from eight to midnight.

Condon's, 117 E. 15th St. (254-0960)—A snug, candlelit catacomb just east of Union Square. Trombonist and composer **BENNY POWELL,** who grew up in New Orleans and who, at the age of twenty-one, began a twelve-year gig with the Count Basie orchestra, leads a quintet here Oct. 2-7; the **RAY BRYANT** trio comes in for a spell as of Oct. 9. Music after ten.

Continental Divide, 25 Third Ave., at St. Marks Pl. (529-6924)—Hipsters, posers, N.Y.U. students, the occasional skinhead—a typical East Village bar. The motif is prehistoric punk—a Stone Age mural, assorted toy dinosaurs and pterodactyls. On peak nights there's a "take no prisoners" atmosphere. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at ten, Fridays at midnight, and Saturdays at eleven.

Dan Lynch, 221 Second Ave., at 14th St. (677-0911)—Outside Dan Lynch, you'll come across a lot of suspicious characters who'll claim to know you; inside you'll find a pupil-dilating, brown-on-brown bar decorated with remnants of a birch tree. The place brightens up considerably at ten with a variety of live blues, including vamps of the "put on your red dress" variety.

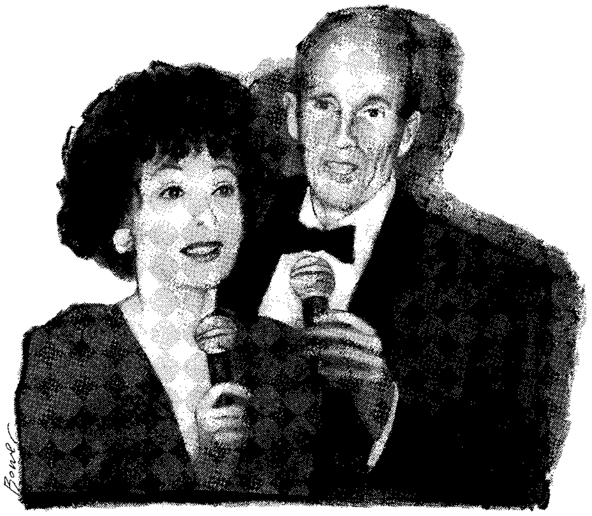
Delta 88, 332 Eighth Ave., at 26th St. (924-3499)—A tin-roofed, hubcap-awninged, soul-food-serving, chicken-shack theme bar. Exhibits include a rusted Orange Crush sign, a Pat Boone record jacket, bottle caps spelling out "Welcome," and other peckerwood flotsam. (If this place weren't a restaurant, it could be a flea market.) The clientele is mainly Northern urban. There's live music most nights, including gospel on Mondays and zydeco on Thursdays. Shows after nine. Chicken-fried steak, deep-fried crawdads (a.k.a. Cajun popcorn), and other exotic Southern fare.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—If submarines had jazz clubs, they might look like this basement haunt, which is reached by passing through a tight corridor where you half expect to bump into Admiral Nimitz. This is not the place for those with a fear of intimacy: at the front tables you can go eye to eye with your favorite performers, and no matter where you're seated there's not much room to practice your T'ai Chi. The **BILL EVANS SUPER BAND** will be here through Oct. 7. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL,** the Thomas Edison of reverb, leads a trio. Music from eight. Dining.

Gonzalez y Gonzalez, 625 Broadway, at Houston St. (473-8787)—Loud, brash, and big. The theme is, of course, Mexican, and you get the whole enchilada—a giant cactus here, a parade-float sombrero there, animal skulls, religious artifacts, and chili-pepper clusters everywhere. The stage is in the rear, about a city block from the entrance.

Greene Street, 101 Greene St. (925-2415)—This is such a gorgeous, thirties-ish movie set of a place that you expect gunmen to burst in at any moment. The restaurant-bar—forested and twilit—is about the size of a football field, with the piano at the fifty-yard line. If your seats are good enough, you'll hear some able entertainers, including Walter Norris Oct. 3-4, Mr. Norris's duo Oct. 5-6, and Andy LaVerne on Oct. 8. Pianist Dave Berkman plays here on Oct. 7, and returns on Oct. 10.

Indigo Blues, 221 W. 46th St. (221-0033)—A sleek, modern jazz club, in the basement of the Hotel Edison, with glass brick, space-age carpeting, and long strips of cool-blue neon. Bronx-born singer **ANGELA BOFILL,** who serves up a mix of pop, cabaret, and Latin music, can be heard Oct. 4-5. Dining.



Carol Lawrence and Larry Kert at Rainbow & Stars

Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—An Old New York kind of place, with dark-wood panelling, white tablecloths, and brass-figurine lamps. The musicians gather around the Steinway that sits in the dining room, but chin music is often the dominant sound. A couple of piano-bass duos will be here this week: **JAMES WILLIAMS** and **CHRISTIAN MC BRIDE** (Oct. 2-4), and **NAT JONES** and **BOOTS MALESON** (Oct. 5-6). **KENNY BARRON** and **PAUL WEST** take over beginning Oct. 10. Music from nine-forty-five.

Knitting Factory, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—Situated in a neighborhood that boasts the Puck Building to the west and a host of windshield washers to the east, this modest space provides a forum for free-thinking musicians. Beat and melody are optional, "music" and "noise" relative terms. The quirky, wordstruck Brooklyn duo **THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS** perform on Oct. 2. Oct. 3-7 is given over to the New York/Tokyo Noisecore Festival, featuring many of the usual suspects (**JOHN ZORN, ELLIOTT SHARP,** and **TED EPSTEIN** on Oct. 3; the **SEMANTICS** and others on Oct. 4; **RUINS** and **MIRACLE ROOM** on Oct. 5) as well as some unusual ones, such as Torture Garden, Mr. Zorn's Japanese hard-core band, on Oct. 6. Music after nine. . . . ¶ The West End Gate (2911 Broadway, at 113th St., 662-8830) hosts the Knitting Factory Uptown on Wednesdays. Oct. 3: the Myra Melford trio. Oct. 10: the Elliott Sharp Project. Shows at nine and eleven.

Marquee, 547 W. 21st St. (929-3257)—A rock club just off the West Side Highway. **CHARLATANS UK,** a nouveau-psychedelic band from guess where, perform on Oct. 4; **WONDERSTUFF** and **PYLON**—R.E.M.'s lesser-known but equally regarded fellow-Athenians—check in on Oct. 5; and **DAVID BAERWALD** lays claim to Oct. 10.

Maxwell's, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken (1-201 798-4064)—A small-pond club for big-fish bands. There's not much here to look at: it's a back-room affair with a dingy stage and a baby grand someone apparently tried to cover with papier-mâché. Still, the bookers know their college-radio playlists: Sonic Youth, Wire, and the Feelies came through not long ago, and R.E.M. and 10,000 Maniacs landed here before even *you* knew who they were. **PYLON** and **FLIGHT OF MAVIS** are here on Oct. 3. **MONO MEN** are in on Oct. 4, along with the **CYNICS,** a Pittsburgh retro-rock out-

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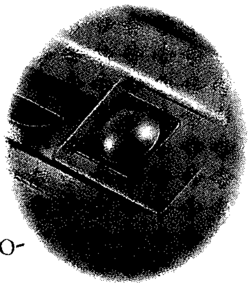

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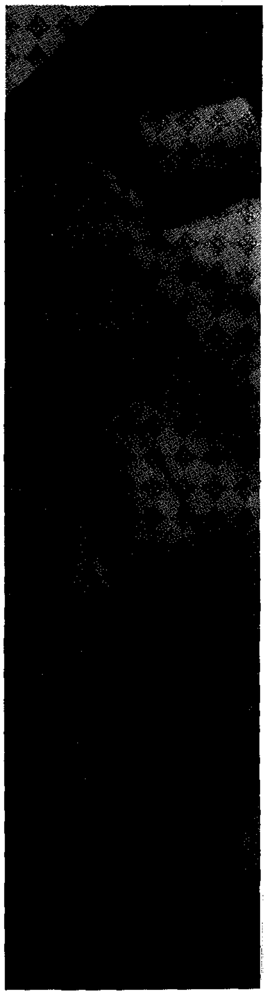

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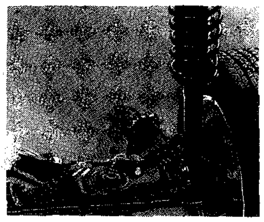

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fit. The Hoboken trio **YO LA TENGO** makes an appearance on Oct. 6 On their fourth and most recent record, "Fakebook," they have shelved their signature envelope-pushing electric guitars for a restrained, primarily acoustic sound, and the bulk of the material is obscure cover songs. The idea worked: the record was a summer sleeper.

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—Where you can always smell the stogies. **MEL TORMÉ,** whose well-preserved, pop-jazz baritone can be heard here through Oct. 7, was singing on the radio regularly by the age of four. Since then, he co-wrote that song about "chestnuts roasting on an open fire"; he made his movie début, along with Sinatra, in "Higher and Higher"; and he penned a biography of Judy Garland, as well as his own autobiography, 1988's "It Wasn't All Velvet." Tormé is currently offering his tribute to Buddy Rich, and the late drummer's band is backing him up. The shows are lively, but Tormé isn't onstage very long: he dashes in, sings some remember-this-ones, spins a few yarns, dishes out the requisite hokey patter, and dashes off again. And, because Tormé can always bring 'em in, the club is so packed with tables that patrons barely have room to swivel their heads. It gets harder and harder for clubgoers to live in the past. Closed Sundays.

RAINBOW & STARS, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—A great, pricey cabaret in the sky. **CAROL LAWRENCE** and **LARRY KERT,** who are performing together for the first time since the original production of "West Side Story," are here for the next week or so. Their program will include Bernstein and Sondheim, of course, along with numbers by Lerner and Lowe, Rodgers and Hart, and others. Shows from nine. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

RED BLAZER TOO, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—A place where *a fella and a gal* can put on the feedbag, get a little tight, and cut a rug. Mondays belong to Howie Wyeth's ragtime trio, Tuesdays to **VINCE GIORDANO AND THE NIGHTHAWKS,** and Wednesdays to Stan Rubin's band. Fridays are the province of Bob Leive and the Worcester Street Trolley Jazz Band, and Bob Cantwell and His Stompers claim Saturdays. Music from six on Sundays, from eight-thirty Mondays through Thursdays, and from nine Fridays and Saturdays.

RITZ, 254 W. 54th St. (541-8900)—A rock establishment where the customer is not always right. If you're willing to endure proof-of-drinking-age wristbands, primitive notions of crowd control, and a staff of "I breaka you face" security people, you can usually find some worthwhile bands. **2 LIVE CREW**—the controversial rappers too nasty for some but just nasty enough for others—perform on Oct. 5. The **RAMONES,** who, it has been said, have only one song but play it very well, are here on Oct. 6. Shows begin at nine Sundays through Thursdays, and at eleven Fridays and Saturdays.

SOUNDS OF BRAZIL, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A big, cheerful room, painted a light tropical blue, where you can pick 'em up and set 'em down to sounds from Brazil, Africa, the Caribbean, and elsewhere. Ample seating for the contemplative. Zydeco mama **QUEEN IDA** holds forth on Oct. 6. Oct 9 belongs to the Senegalese singer **YOUSSOU N'DOUR,** known to many Americans for his work with Peter Gabriel and Paul Simon. Mr. N'Dour's percussion-oriented band always throws a good dance party, and speakers of Wolof will have the added benefit of understanding the lyrics. Closed Sundays. Dining.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—An itinerary stop for the international jazz groupies who, on any given night, can be seen roaming the streets of the Village. Up front, there's a glass-enclosed sidewalk café; in back is a larger room, with a pressed-tin ceiling, red brick, and more pinewood than a ski lodge. **ART BLAKEY,** whose band, the **JAZZ MESSENGERS,** has long been one of jazz's premier finishing schools, is currently in ascendance. An electrified big band belonging to trumpeter Miles Evans is in action on Mondays. Tee-off time is ten. Dining.

TRAMPS, 45 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—Located on a Chelsea block that's like an urban Disneyland (Chelsea Billiards, an indoor miniature-golf course, a trendy all-night diner, Limelight around the corner), this roller-rink-size bar-and-restaurant is a lot bigger and a lot slicker than the old Tramps, but the emphasis on solid rock and blues remains. The slightly warped English popster **ROBYN HITCHCOCK** will be here Oct. 3-4; the Skeletons and the Bluerunners take over on Oct. 5; and **SON SEALS** comes in on Oct. 6.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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LAND HO

At the top of its sixty-seven-foot granite base at Columbus Circle, the statue of Christopher Columbus is currently enduring a series of beauty treatments that would daunt even the sturdiest spa-goer. Under the auspices of the public/private Adopt-a-Monument program (and paid for in large part by the Columbus Citizens Foundation), crews are coating his thirteen-foot-tall Carrara-marble body with a dirt-softening mud bath of clay and ammonium carbonate; shooting high-powered pumice-and-water sprays at him, from his cocked hat to his buckled shoes; applying cotton pads soaked with hydrogen peroxide to his less exposed parts, to kill lichens growing there; and, finally, injecting him with syringes full of consolidant, to prevent more of him from turning to powder and blowing down Broadway. But even after he emerges from his web of scaffolding, on November 15, he will not be perfect; the project's head conservationist, a Norwegian named Erling Laberg, who spent the past decade preserving Roman antiquities, does not believe in rebuilding worn-away features on old statues. "It would be like putting the arms back on the Venus de Milo," he says. Fortunately, some of Columbus's flaws are appropriate; it makes sense that the lapels of a weary sea captain's cape are tattered, and that the tiller he holds looks ready to snap in two.

VILLAGE GATE, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—One flight up, in the airy space known as the Terrace Bar, the **JOHN MEDESKI** *trio is in session* Wednesdays through Sundays.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The late Max Gordon, who opened this holiest of jazz shrines in 1935, once described the club's early patrons as a mix of "poets, W.P.A. writers, hustlers, broads on the make, and moochers." Pianist, composer, and teacher **KENNY BARRON,** who came up with Dizzy Gillespie's band in the sixties, brings in a quintet Oct. 2-7. **GERI ALLEN,** a young Brooklyn-based pianist known for a touch of Monk and a dense, rhythmic attack, starts work with her quartet on Oct. 9. A seventeen-piece big band formerly led by the late Mel Lewis holds sway on Mondays. Music after ten.

WETLANDS, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—Two floors of no-nuke veggie entertainment and consciousness-raising. Listen to bands play in the Summer of Love-muralled back room; buy a tie-dyed T-shirt at the Volkswagen-bus curio shop; catch up on current events at the bulletin board and community calendar. Or, if you'd rather just be mellow, crash out in the basement hippie love pad.

WOODY'S, 82 E. 4th St. (982-3686)—Rolling Stones guitarist Ron Wood's club is a black-painted basement with mirrors, rotating spotlights, and enough sofas to rival Jennifer Convertibles. *Stones memorabilia, with an* emphasis on Ronnie himself, provide the primary decoration. Oct. 6 belongs to **JESUS JONES.** Shows Wednesdays through Saturdays, from about eleven.

ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—One of those snazzy, awninged eateries you've seen nestled amid brownstones in the Village and always wondered about. Music weeknights from eight, and Sundays from seven.

EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

AT the first sign of a chill, with their Hamptons and Fire Island rentals having expired, the fading ones abandoned terraces overlooking Central Park, thirsty garden apartments in Clinton, the shores of Sheepshead Bay, and those Dickensian row houses alongside the expressway in Bayside, all the while telling friends and co-workers that they had to visit "the folks" for the High Holidays, but hoping, perhaps, that God would provide sun as well as forgiveness. Thank goodness He in His wisdom had created Florida for all their parents to retire to.

And so, on Thursday and Friday, temples from Delray Beach to Coconut Grove were jammed with white Lincolns and canvas-topped Sedan DeVilles full of "the kids" from New York. But by Friday night the hundred miles of non-gray-haired visitors to the Gold Coast had converged on Miami Beach's Ocean Avenue. Though this was not yet the coming of the "snowbirds" (the name resident Floridians give to wintering Northerners), the restaurants, bars, cafés, and clubs along this now miracle mile were pumping with the toned. More than the usual number of police were directing traffic around the triple-parked cars in front of Club Passion, Torpedo had its busiest weekend ever, the wait at Lulu's was up to an hour, the Warsaw Ballroom's circus motif was obscured by *perpetually fogged lenses, and three* poorly placed lamps at Semper's almost went from antique to junk shop within a few minutes. The scene's ground zero—the now-open-twenty-four-hours-on-the-weekend News Cafe—boasted every model and wannabe who has ever picked at a fruit plate, in a more sharp-focussed review of the troops than those that used to occur on May Day in Red Square.

"This is just like SoHo," squealed one of the facially blessed who travel with one name, insufferably spelled. No, it's more like Columbus Avenue. But what no longer works on the Upper West Side succeeds at the shoreline. It's not Miami's abundance of sun that makes the difference; it's the lack of cynicism. You can be a virgin only once, and right now Ocean Avenue is flirting feverishly, entertaining suitors from all over the world. "We didn't see this many cuties all summer," sighed one ex-Westhamptonite. "I can't believe I'm going to buy a new bathing suit." Start the new year with a tan and a smile—who could ask for anything more?

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

DENNIS WOLFBERG has a special way of delivering a punch line: he makes a pop-eyed grimace, his tongue darts out like a lizard's, and the words explode in a high-pitched, strangled yell. At an appearance at Caroline's this past spring (he returns there October 3-7; call 233-4900 for information), he recounted how, while he was napping on the plane ride into town, a stewardess woke him to ask if he was thirsty. "I told her no, I do the vast majority of my drinking while I'm *conscious!* Thank you for waking me, though—I had just passed out from dehy*dra*tion! I could have dried up like a *prune* had it not been for your airborne *vi*gilance!" Less studied than, say, Emo Philips' spacey falsetto or Bob Goldthwait's constipated yelps, Wolfberg's outbursts convey a bemused exasperation, and his sarcasm is fuelled less by anger than by wonder. This benevolence is a rare attribute on the comedy circuit, a point made clear at the same performance, where he was preceded by two jarringly hostile comics. The arrival onstage of Mr. Wolfberg, a cherubic, curly-red-haired forty-four-year-old who dresses the way mothers like their sons to dress, was greeted by a sigh of relief. A former schoolteacher, he has perfect diction, swears seldom, and uses more relative clauses than Dick Cavett. His anecdotes about everything from Little League to the Lamaze method ("I think we all agree that breathing is a reasonable substitute for anes*thes*ia!") display the kind of self-deprecating, sympathetic-underdog point of view that's a well-travelled tradition of Jewish humor, but his impish delivery adds a fresh twist. And he has a knack for finding comedy in the most ordinary domestic territory. "Jewish people will often name a baby after a person who has died," he explains, "such as my cousin who was named Grandpa."

NEXT WAVE FESTIVAL—Martha Clarke's latest work, "Endangered Species." (Oct. 2 at 7, Oct. 3-6 at 8, Oct. 7 at 3 and 7, and Oct. 9-10 at 8. Through Nov. 4.) . . . ¶ Monnaie Dance Group/Mark Morris. (Oct. 6-7 at 7, Oct. 9 at 8, and Oct. 10 at 7:30. Through Oct. 14.) (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. The festival continues through Dec. 9.)

HOLLY HUGHES—In a reprise of "World Without End," Oct. 4-6 at 7:30. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

"BUGS BUNNY ON BROADWAY"—Vintage rabbit cartoons, with live music by a forty-piece orchestra. (Gershwin Theatre, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510. Through Oct. 7.)

ART

ADOLPH MENZEL (1815-1905) stayed all his long adult life in Berlin, living with his sister's family, except for a few visits to Paris and more frequent, lengthier sojourns in the country cottages and spas of his beloved Germany. He spoke no foreign languages. He was born into a petit-bourgeois household of declining fortunes, and after the death of his father he had to take over the family's small lithography concern, leaving school at the age of sixteen. Later, his workshop at Sigismundstrasse 3 would be described by the writer Julius Haselblatt as "perhaps Berlin's ugliest artist's studio." The artist himself was four feet six inches tall, with a disproportionately large head. Possibly in part because of this, he was so wary of any romantic entanglement or openly carnal engagement that he emitted a surprisingly avuncular cri de coeur through his will, proclaiming to all posterity that "not only did I remain unmarried, throughout my life I dismissed every kind of relationship with the opposite sex (as such)." His erotic passion for men seems to have been stronger, judging from a few of his many works on paper now on view at the Frick (through November 18), but these feelings were more than likely as effectively repressed. We may get the message, however, from Menzel's stunning, flesh-warm drawing of the Barberini Faun; in the blurred lustfulness imparted to the nude torsos of captives in "Prisoner Transport (Prussian Soldiers and French Prisoners of War)"; in his deep platonic renderings of suits of armor; and in a beautiful sketch, called "Moltke's Binoculars," of leather long caressed and distressed.

Menzel was nevertheless a court painter who belonged to the Berlin literati and enjoyed a reputation as a bon vivant, raconteur, and lover of music. He regretted his "wild youth not spent." He was so well liked and admired that Theodor Fontane, a major critic of the day, was moved to praise Menzel's "noble and kind artist's nature," and to claim that Menzel "was a lifelong master of concentration and, because of this, made a career of art without ever being a careerist." Degas, too, was an admirer, even though Menzel's own pictures of daily life were less misanthropic, more like illustrations, and more gemütlich than his greater French counterpart's. His work was very popular throughout most of his life. Yet in a drawing titled "Three Bears in a Cage" some viewers may feel that Menzel's eyes are peering out through the bars, from the face of the bear on the left.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—A retrospective featuring eighty paintings and thirty drawings by the British artist Joseph Wright (1734-97). Through Dec. 2.

"I thought I'd suffered slings and arrows!"
—HAMLET

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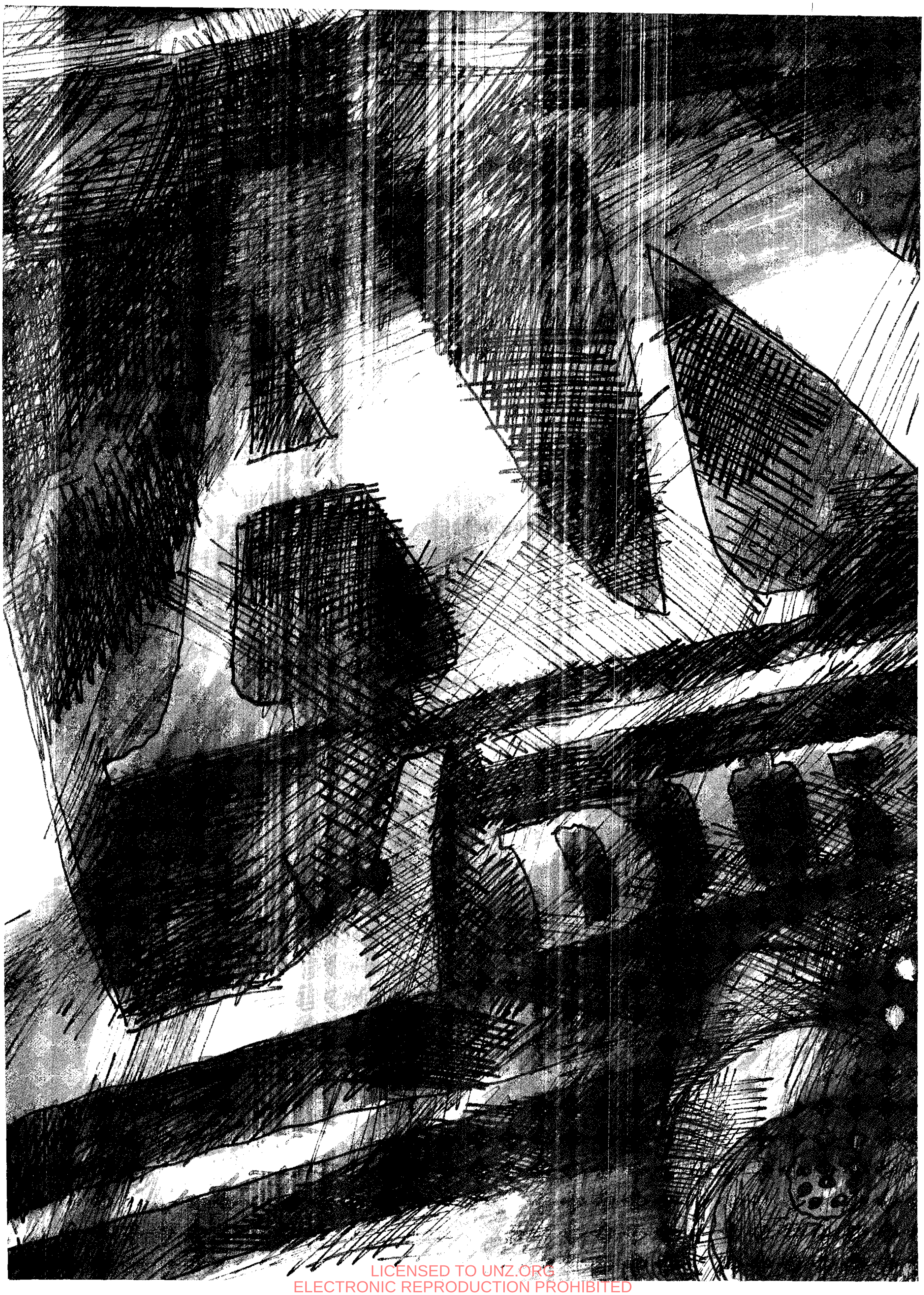

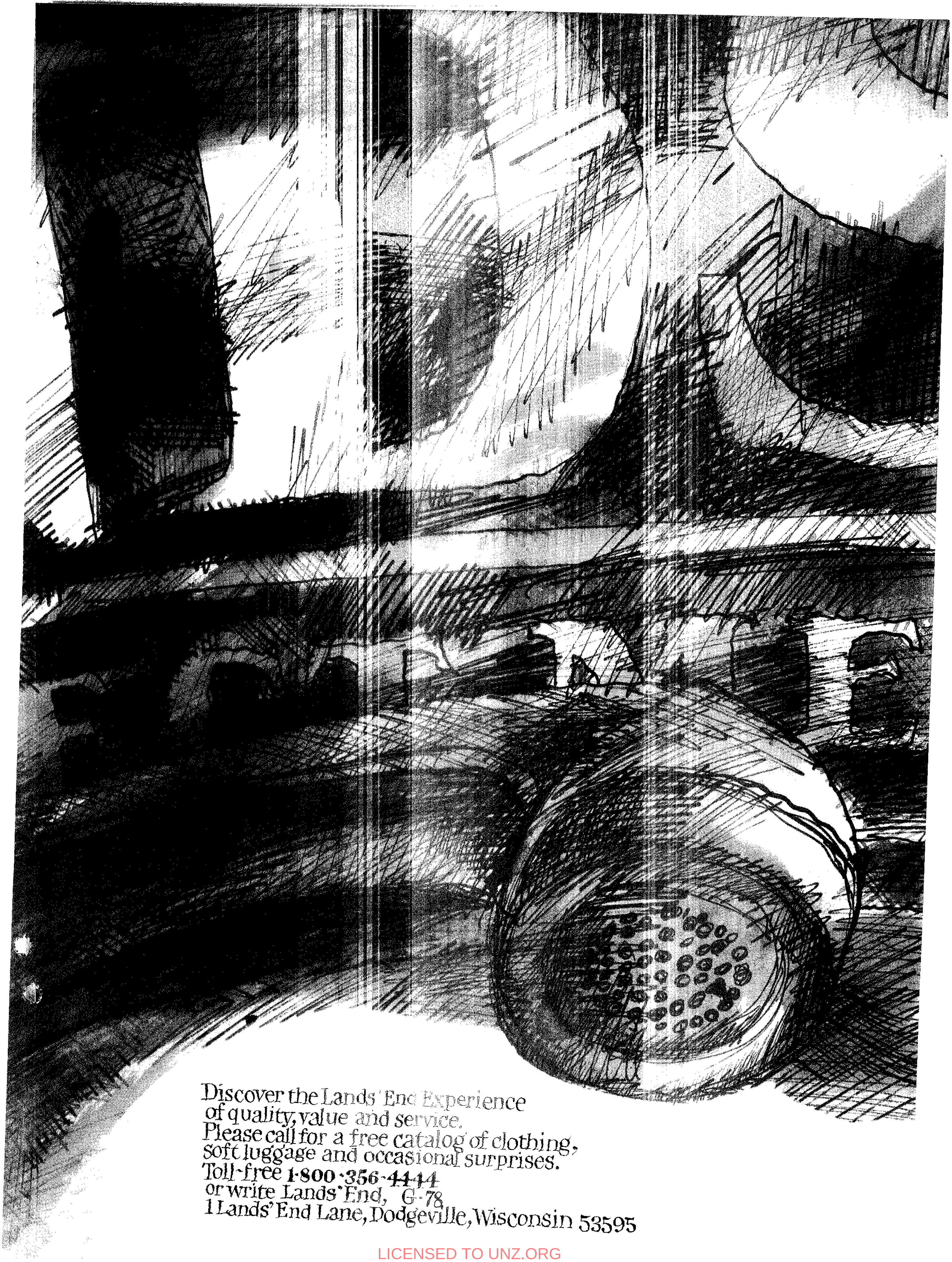

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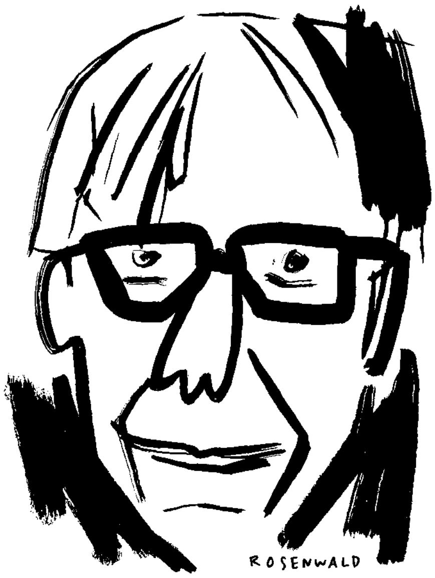


Willem de Kooning

. . . ¶ Nineteen chalk-and-graphite drawings by John Singleton Copley (1738-1815). They are mostly studies for his enormous paintings, such as "The Ascension," "Siege of Gibraltar," and his portrait of John Adams. . . . ¶ "Glories of the Past" is an exhibition of bronze and marble sculptures, vases, and jewelry made between 5000 B.C. and A.D. 800 that focusses on works from the Mediterranean and the Near East. . . . ¶ An exhibition of eighteenth-century Italian drawings, including works by Francesco Guardi, Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, and others. Through Dec. 9. . . . **NOTE:** The museum's roof garden is open (when the weather is fine), with a new lineup of twentieth-century sculptures and a sixty-five-foot shade-providing pergola. Through Oct. 28. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, and Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.—"High and Low: Modern Art and Popular Culture" will be divided into four themes (graffiti, caricature, comics, advertising) and will include more than two hundred and fifty works. Starts Oct. 7. . . . ¶ "First Light," a suite of twenty black-and-white etchings by James Turrell. Through Nov. 13. . . . ¶ "Diagramming Microchips," a small exhibition of the large, colorful, computer-generated diagrams used to design microchips, is an attempt to bridge the gulf between high art and everyday objects that dominates our visual perception. Unfortunately, the microchip diagrams are displayed as if they were paintings, and as such they beg comparison with everything from Mondrian's "Broadway Boogie-Woogie" to pattern painting. Some of the colorful, densely packed circuitry contains signatures or logos of the chips' designers—computer-nerd graffiti. Through Oct. 30. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The museum is closed for renovation until autumn, 1991.

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—"Burgoyne Diller" (1906-65). As the art world, fearful of a volatile art market, attempts to trade in flash for longevity, this tortoise of American neoplastic painting could become a curious role model. At times his debt to Mondrian was astonishingly blatant, but with each carefully introduced turn Diller eventually found his own path. As this sharply selective retrospective makes clear, even the seemingly unflappable Diller began to lose his faith when the drippers became all the rage in the fifties, but he soon recovered. At the end of his life, he painted works of great emotion, just as the tides once again shifted and he could be seen as a visionary proto-minimalist. Through Nov. 25. (A show of drawings is at Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St., through Oct. 6.) . . . ¶ "Mind Over Matter," a show of more than fifty conceptually oriented works by Ashley Bickerton, Annette Lemieux, Nayland Blake, Tishan Hsu, Ronald Jones, and Liz Larner. Starts Oct. 3. . . . ¶ A group of ten grisaille drawings by Ed Ruscha called "Some Los Angeles Apartments," made in 1965 in conjunction with the photography book of the same name. Through Oct. 14. (Open Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM, Eastern Parkway—An exhibition of sixty paintings by Albert Pinkham Ryder (1847-1917). . . . ¶ "Milton Avery in Black and White" is a display of eighty drawings in pencil, ink, and crayon made by Avery between 1929 and 1959. Through Dec. 31. . . . ¶ A site-specific installation by Joseph Kosuth is on view in the museum's lobby. Through Dec. 3. . . . ¶ "Caribbean Festival Arts" presents costumes, masks, videotapes, music, and photographs related to the traditional celebrations of Jonkonnu, Carnival, and the Islamic Hosay. The thirty-six costume ensembles include materials such as mirrors, feathers, sequins, and beads, and range from human scale to sixteen feet tall. Through Nov. 5. . . . ¶ A display of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist paintings and works on paper titled "Monet and His Contemporaries." Included are five works by Monet, and others by Degas, Toulouse-Lautrec, van Gogh, and Picasso. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 10 to 5.)

ASIA SOCIETY, Park Ave. at 70th St.—"Court Arts of Indonesia" establishes a Javanese *kraton*, or court, to display more than a hundred and fifty works of art from the eighth century to the twentieth. Included are elaborate shadow puppets, a jewelled *rebab* (a stringed instrument) from Bali, and ritual marriage figures. Through Dec. 16. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 5.)

BRONX MUSEUM OF THE ARTS, 1040 Grand Concourse—"Visions of Home" is a display of ten prize-winning designs, along with forty other entries, for affordable housing at a specific seven-acre site in the South Bronx. The show is part of this fall's "Home: A Place in the World" series. . . . ¶ Seventy prints produced by El Taller de Gráfica Popular, founded in 1937 in Mexico. The show is part of the series "Mexico: A Work of Art." (Open weekdays, except Fridays, 10 to 4:30; Sundays, 11 to 4:30.)

FRICK COLLECTION, 1 E. 70th St.—Seventy-eight drawings and watercolors by the German artist Adolph Menzel (1815-1905). Through Nov. 18. (Open daily, except Mondays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

GROLIER CLUB, 47 E. 60th St.—An exhibition of eighty leather-bound, gold-tooled bookbindings from Renaissance France and Italy. Through Nov. 24. (Open daily, except Sundays, 10 to 5.)

JEWISH MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—"A Day in the Warsaw Ghetto." Eighty-five photographs taken in September, 1941, by Heinz Jöst, who was a member of the German Army at the time. Through Nov. 1. . . . ¶ "Why I Got Into TV and Other Stories," a "mid-career" retrospective of Ilene Segalove's taped stories, radio programs, and photographic collages. Through Nov. 1. . . . ¶ A show of ten paintings and drawings, and a contemporary interpretation of a sukkah, or improvised shelter, by the artist Eli Content. Through Nov. 1. (Open Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, except Oct. 4, noon to 5; Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

MORGAN LIBRARY, 29 E. 36th St.—"Treasures of Eton College Library," a selection, from the five-hundred-and-fifty-year-old institution, of more than two hundred manuscripts, rare books, drawings, and watercolors. Included are the first edition of Thomas Gray's "Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College" and the manuscript of "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard." Through Nov. 25. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

MUSEUM OF AMERICAN FOLK ART, Columbus Ave. at 65th St.—"Five-Star Folk Art." And five-star it is—it doesn't get better than this. Some of the works in this exhibition of seventy pieces are familiar (by now, we're well acquainted with Ammi Phillips' "Girl in Red Dress with Cat and Dog," from the museum's collection), as are the fine examples here of mourning pictures, trade signs, and weathervanes, yet there are also surprising knockouts. "Husbands and Wives Going to a Dance" (circa 1880), by an anonymous Kiowa artist from Oklahoma, for example, is an exquisite, crisp rendering in colored pencil, unself-consciously drawn on a piece of lined ledger paper yet reminiscent of a medieval miniature. Olof Krans's oil painting "Corn Planting" (1896) is an arresting, stark study of cloudy sky and barren fields with a chain of women in a diagonal line across the landscape, which captures both the isolation and the connectedness in this farm labor. An animated and bejewelled carrousel horse by Stein and Goldstein (1912-16) whinnies at a laughably ferocious leopard on its back whose glass eyes follow the viewer wherever he goes. Through Dec. 2. (Open daily, 9 to 9.)

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF DESIGN, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"Women in Mexico" presents more than a hundred paintings, drawings, collages, and photographs by twenty-two Mexican women artists. Through Dec. 2. . . . ¶ A retrospective featuring fifty-nine works by Gari Melchers (1860-1932). Included are portraits, religious scenes, landscapes, and nudes. Through Nov. 4. (Open Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

THE NEW MUSEUM, 583 Broadway—"From Receiver to Remote Control: The TV Set." This exhibition and the accompanying catalogue must be the first to focus on the television set—not as a great work of art or design but as something that was as eagerly embraced by the family as a puppy. The show features serpentine banks of virtually every TV model, from the first to the most current, and meticulously reconstructed period rooms that attempt to define a sociology of family life as it has revolved around the set. But for all its World's Fair pretensions the show offers no odd turns to amaze the senses; it is more like a blown-up book. The only part of the show to lead us down an unexplored alley is an installation of thirty-six sets tuned to all but two of the stations currently available in New York City: it's not a nostalgia trip but a thing itself, a "live," real-time time warp, worthy of Nam June Paik. But despite the shortcomings of the show the installation is quite stimulating (except for the bizarre inclusion of a satellite dish, which is inappropriately pointed downward). Tucked away in a corner is the exhibition's only piece of art, a sculpture by Rebecca Howland of a transmission tower. It is both majestic and threatening, a scary monster and an embracing mother. Through Nov. 25. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, noon to 8.)

NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—An exhibition that reunites more than sixty of the American paintings that were displayed at the 1889 World's Fair, in Paris. Included are works by John Singer Sargent, Theodore Robinson, William Merritt Chase, and James McNeill Whistler. Through Nov. 15. . . . ¶ Forty-five platinum-print photographs of New York City by Charles Gilbert Hine (1859-1931). (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

QUEENS MUSEUM, Flushing Meadow Park—"Keith Haring: Future Primeval." The art world enacted some of its most callous opportunism on the eager and willing Haring (1958-90), and as this brilliantly selected show—which makes a point of not being a retrospective—indicates, no other contemporary artist seems to be so known and yet so misunderstood. The operative word in this survey of works from the first half of Haring's brief but loaded career is diversity. Even his earliest student works (1979) display a simultaneous interest in Expressionism and illustration, abstraction and representation, shock and fine design. The kind of Pollocky over-all composition that has fascinated so many artists is reinterpreted by Haring as a camouflage, a means of masking covert imagery with bouncy rhythms, just as he consistently hid some racy sexual scenes behind adorable radiant children. Haring's greatest impact was as a social force, someone who formed a link between the street and art, black and white, kids and adults; this is beautifully portrayed in the selections, which include many preserved subway drawings. In the mid-eighties, when he was a rising world-wide media star, before he was diagnosed with AIDS and his creative activism with ACT UP began, Haring experimented with color, asymmetrical compositions, a more scenelike narrative. These post-pictographic paintings are generally considered inferior; however, the few such works included here are gems and suggest, as a show like this should but rarely does, that further study is in order. Through Nov. 25. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, noon to 5:30.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—"Home: Contemporary Urban Images by Black Photographers." More than ninety works by eleven photographers. Through Dec. 30. . . . ¶ Eighty contemporary works, including paintings, sculptures, photographs, musical instruments, and videotapes, make up "The Blues Aesthetic," an exhibition that explores the impact of African-American culture on twentieth-century art. Through Dec. 30. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Willem de Kooning—The earliest work in this brisk, lucid show is titled "Glazier" (1940), and is one of the artist's psychologically compelling but unsung portraits of men. It was made during the peak of his friendship with Arshile Gorky, whose febrile, introspective influence is in this case visible. De Kooning's wild fifties women are of course represented, too. There is a carnivalesque "Marilyn Monroe" (1954) and MOMA's epochal "Woman II" (1952), in addition to works on paper. Most thrilling, however, are two paintings from 1984. In these technically incomprehensible canvases, pure flame-licks of primary color seem to have soared skyward into a sun-drenched cloud chariot of white. It's like Mondrian by Tiepolo—experience this buggy ride and die! Through Oct. 13. (Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St.)

David Robilliard (1952-88)—Robilliard was one of the freshest talents to emerge from London in the late eighties. Primarily a poet, he also created lean paintings, both sly and naïve, of his poems about youth and beauty, their power and their fragility. The works on view here have a childlike directness and a haunting clarity. Through Oct. 6. (Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St. Open Mondays.)

Short List—**ROBERT BIRMELIN,** Claude Bernard, 33 E. 74th St. (through Oct. 6); **FRANK STELLA,** Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. (through Oct. 20).

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

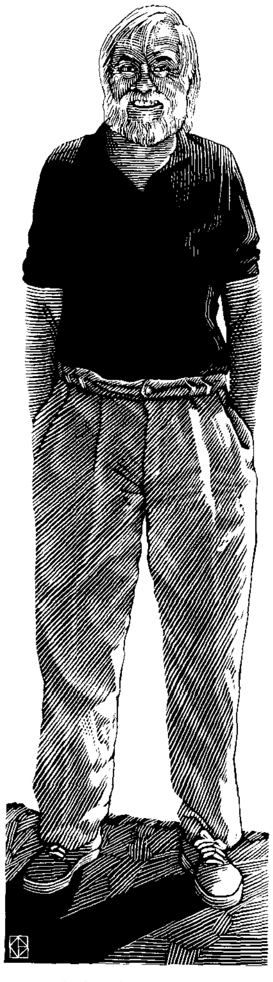
Robert Arneson / Joan Brown—Arneson is perhaps the only Bay Area ceramicist to consistently get over the craft hump. His newest work is a mammoth three-dimensional interpretation of Jackson Pollock's "Guardians of the Secret," and it is a tour de force of medium, ideas, and parody. The work uses intricately psychoanalyzable imagery to poke fun at myths of genius and male prowess embodied by the Great Dripper. In one instance, two guardian figures (which also recall the Cubism of Picasso, that other king of virility) support a kind of breastplate painting (unframed) that in turn covers an entombment, viewable from the rear of the work, of the artist's head, as well as an erection and a pair of green boots. Through Oct. 13. / Strong women, strong gestures, and a feministic reinterpretation of the Matissean Odalisque inform the figurative drawings and paintings on paper from the early seventies in this small but rich show. Through Oct. 19. (Frumkin-Adams, 50 W. 57th St.)

Barry Flanagan—An extraordinarily buoyant, upbeat show by an important British sculptor whose work is infrequently exhibited here, apart from the permanent installation of one of his leaping hares in the sidewalk atrium of the Equitable Center. Rabbits are also the subject of this exhibition—huge bronze statues of them, rendered singly and in pairs, as figures leaping, boxing, and enlivening such decorative-arts conventions as the ball-and-claw motif of Empire furniture. Through Oct. 13. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.)

Harry Holtzman (1912-87)—Drawings from the nineteen-thirties and sculpture from the nineteen-eighties by a precocious and progressive American modernist who was a younger friend to Burgoyne Diller, as well as to Mondrian. He helped arrange the Dutch master's arrival in New York during the London blitz. Holtzman's thirties drawings suggest an almost impressionistic, loose-wristed interpretation of Mondrian's classically rectilinear model, while the recent sculptures suggest the opposite. They are bold, handsome, and rather rigid homages. With their wood panels in primary colors and their naturalistic elements—chunks of stone like those in Japanese rock gardens—they also resemble screens and room dividers by Eames and furniture designs by George Nakashima. Through Oct. 27. (Washburn, 41 E. 57th St.)

Muntadas—In this mixed-media installation the artist argues that throughout history stadiums have been used as arenas for control. The argument is made most effectively with projected slides of everything from ancient sports stadiums to the Democratic National Convention and Nazi rallies, and a spliced soundtrack of cheering crowds, the teary charismatic faithful, and even an occasional popular song (Prince singing "Let's Go Crazy"). The force of the piece is undermined somewhat by unnecessary touches of textbook deconstructivism, like the flashing of such words as "fences" and "exits." A series of prints, each consisting of three photographs on the same theme, form semantic rebuses and prove that the artist can condense his ideas quite cogently. Through Oct. 6. (Kent, 41 E. 57th St.)

Beverly Pepper / Burgoyne Diller (1906-65)—A surprisingly strong show of recent work by this established, and rather conventional, sculptor—low reliefs in sometimes beautifully patinated bronze, and freestanding, totemlike sentinels and columns. Pepper conveys the sensuality of brushwork in the reliefs and, in the vertical pieces, suggests the faintly comic, predatory sense of the human scale that some viewers may associate with Surrealism and the sculptures of Max Ernst. / A selection of thirty abstract drawings made between 1945 and 1961 that augments the Diller retrospective at the Whitney, revealing to full advantage this neoplasticist's subtle, detailed, and transcendent touch. Both shows through Oct. 6. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)



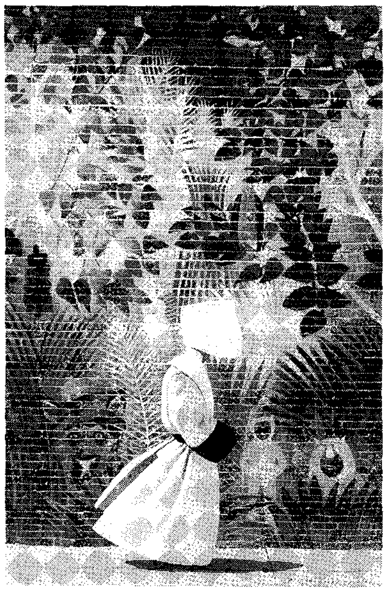
John Baldessari

Pat Steir—New paintings, all "Waterfalls," that are triumphant in more than one sense. With their lustrous black grounds and their cascades, rivulets, and spumes of white alternately silvered or ivoried, these works surge with movement and yet are utterly decorous. They are both literal and metaphorical; simultaneously realist and abstract; and at once aleatory, with their drips and splashes, and methodologically driven. Through Oct. 6. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

Short List—**KATHERINE BOWLING,** Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St. (through Oct. 20); **SQUEAK CARNWATH,** Shea & Beker, 20 W. 57th St. (through Oct. 13); **JOANNE CARSON** and **JAN HOLCOMB,** Ruth Siegel, 24 W. 57th St. (through Oct. 6); **GIORGIO CAVALLON,** McCoy, 41 E. 57th St. (through Oct. 27); **JAMES COOK,** Tatistcheff, 50 W. 57th St. (through Oct. 10); **LOVIS CORINTH,** Galerie St. Etienne, 24 W. 57th St. (through Nov. 3); **BEATRICE ERICSON,** Gallery 84, 50 W. 57th St. (through Oct. 6); **ELLEN FRANK,** Heidenberg, 50 W. 57th St. (through Oct. 27); **DOUGLAS HUEBLER** and **MICHAEL GONZALEZ,** Holly Solomon, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (open Mondays, through Oct. 6); **PAUL HUNTER,** De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St. (through Oct. 20); **JOHN FREDERICK KENSETT,** Babcock, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through Oct. 20); **ANN MC COY,** Herstand, 24 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through Nov. 3); **FERRAN GARCÍA SEVILLA,** Galerie Lelong, 20 W. 57th St. (through Oct. 6); **BON-**

Robert Vickrey
Recent Paintings

Mirror Negative, 1989; tempera
20½ x 15½ inches; signed lower left



Rousseau Negative, 1990; egg tempera
18 x 12 inches; signed lower right

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ART–Cont'd

NIE SKLARSKI, Schoelkopf, 50 W. 57th St. (through Oct. 10); **RUFINO TAMAYO,** Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through Oct. 16); **ERNEST TROVA,** ACA, 41 E. 57th St. (through Oct. 20).

GALLERIES—SoHo

JOSEPH AMAR—The newest installment in the nature/culture discussion is delivered here in the form of single-color paintings, each a different shade of green. The exhibition as a whole looks quite beautiful but somewhat fragile. The artist is clearly indebted to the great monochromists—most evidently Kelly for form and Marden for mood—without distinguishing himself. Through Oct. 13. (Lorence-Monk, 578 Broadway.)

NANCY DWYER—This artist's clever wordplays are becoming even more clever. Her paintings are not quite "there" yet, but some of the furniture-size sculptures are true gems: they manage to shoot from the hip, the heart, and the deconstructive mind all at once. In a room by itself is a huge inflated "EGO," the big yellow letters made of helium-filled fabric weighted down by little anchors. The word "GET" is suspended by poles above a mirror, but is somehow transformed in its reflection to read "OFF." There is a "RAGE" on wheels, the "G" being a hinged flap opening out from a former "C," and Dwyer's version of a ponderous work, the word "FOOD" custom-made from four steel garbage cans. Underlying the work is a personality that seems to enjoy poking fun at the pretensions of much neo-Conceptualism. It all looks great at the Josh Baer gallery's new address, a gorgeous *and* comfortable Euro-style space that suggests this season's market prognosis is not all gloom and doom. Through Oct. 20. (476 Broome St.)

DICK HIGGINS—Ye olde paintings, by the Fluxus master and the creator of the underground's premier publisher, the Something Else Press. Made in shades of brown, containing Renaissance diagrams, zodiac signs, animal pictures, and various references to a metaphoric sideshow—card tricks, palm readings, and even the derring-do of "The Learned Pig!"—the paintings are somewhat entertaining. But by and large they are a nonpainter's paintings and, as such, try too hard: freshwater fish caught in a strong ocean undertow. Through Oct. 20. (Harvey, 537 Broadway.)

PETER NADIN—This artist is one of the best at illustrating the endgame of painting—and enjoying it. His portraits of the studio and his paintings within paintings are, appropriately, both lush and programmatic. Through Oct. 13. (Gorney, 100 Greene St.)

JUDY PFAFF—Every once in a while an artist taps into a vein that seemed long dry and hits a lode. That's what Pfaff has done with the Cubist tradition. She created a sensation in the late seventies with her brilliant installation works, in which viewers felt as if they had entered a drawing. In many ways her mission of the last decade has been to capture the same energetic spirit in discrete objects, a difficult task that at times seemed to be of questionable value. But she has reached that goal in these new medium-scale works, and the effort has proven worthwhile. They have a serpentine sense of movement and are very colorful; they are among her most sculptural pieces while still maintaining their connection with a tradition of painting. Along with other elements, they contain large metal armatures that resemble bottle holders, sixties furniture, dressmakers' mannequins, and umbrella frames holding halved bottles and empty food cans: a Cubist conceit. Through Oct. 27. (Protetch, 560 Broadway.)

SAL SCARPITTA—This underrated Abstract Expressionist sculptor has elevated his obsession with racing to an art. (When he has the opportunity, he professionally races cars that he builds himself.) On a pile of potatoes—perhaps representing labor, nourishment, and the earth—sits one of Scarpitta's cars. The artist proudly displays his name on the car's body, but the signature is eclipsed by the marqueelike canopy above it, emblazoned with the words "LEO CASTELLI ART." As evidenced by the battered signs throughout the gallery, the missionary artmobile often winds up bruised and bent, only to come alive again. Through Oct. 20. (Greenberg Wilson, 560 Broadway.)

MICHAEL SCOTT—Phillip Taafe reintroduced it, Ross Bleckner gave it legitimacy, and now this young painter has brought Op art full circle. His paintings of skinny black-and-white horizontal stripes are so optical that any lingering gaze is likely to degenerate quite rapidly into a sickening miasma of vibrations. If you manage to get close to them, you may notice that the surfaces are exquisitely painted. The artist's antagonism toward the viewer is not uninteresting, but it's not clear what the point is. Through Oct. 20. (Shafrazi, 163 Mercer St.)

ALAN STOREY—Installation art in the United States got short shrift in the eighties, but the documentation and models on display here—of some zany installation and public art works—suggests that it is alive and well in Canada. Some of the works—particularly the site-specific installation piece in this gallery—fail to rise above their own silliness, but others are more resonant: "The Flying Piano," which was suspended from cables and swung from side to side in a rolling crescendo as it moved across the exhibition space; an oversized contraption that turned people into pet rodents; and a work entitled "Draw II (Machine for Drawing on the Prairie)," which used a vacuum cleaner, a bumper car, and viewers to create a relationship that was both absurd and poignant. Through Oct. 6. (49th Parallel, 420 West Broadway.)

"PAINTING ALONE"—A very sane show of nonrepresentational paintings by seven artists, most of them unfamiliar in New York. All the artists work with a basic language of mark-making, but the show avoids looking like yet another claim for the rebirth of painting. The works display varying degrees of glibness, yet somehow come across as romantic. Callum Innes, a young Scottish painter, makes rudimentary marks that look like wounds on the canvas. In a similar vein, the young English artist Ian Davenport makes very clean upside-down drip paintings that are reassuringly simple. Some of the artists are not so interesting, but in this context the somewhat more seasoned, and pranksterish, Georg Herold looks positively visionary. His paintings, which use caviar and mother-of-pearl, are ghostly and alchemical. Through Oct. 13. (Pace, 142 Greene St.)

"GRIDS"—A show of everything that may be perceived as having a grid, from a Sol LeWitt cube sculpture to a flaggish painting by Cary Smith, an early Jennifer Bartlett steel-plate painting, a quilt, and children's toys designed to promote divine unity. Other pieces include Jackie Winsor's wire-mesh sculpture, Roger Brown's Midwest landscape, Joyce Kozloff's exotic patterns, and even Jiří Georg Dokoupil's grid of faces of porn stars in moments of ecstasy. Of course there's a Muybridge, and even a sweet de Stijl painting by Karl Peter Rohl, which is campy Mondrian. There are no great revelations here, just a lot of good stuff from artists who are rarely grouped together. Through Oct. 13. (Baghoomian, 555 Broadway.)

SHORT LIST—NORMAN BARR and **JULES HALFANT,** Teller, 568 Broadway (through Oct. 6); **ROBERT BARRY,** Castelli, 420 West Broadway (through Oct. 13); **JEFFREY BROSK,** Rosenberg, 115 Wooster St. (through Oct. 20); **SAINT CLAIR CEMIN,** Audiello and Sperone Westwater, both at 142 Greene St. (through Oct. 13); **ERIC DE LA COVA** and **MARTIN WONG,** Plumb, 81 Greene St. (through Oct. 13); **HACHIVI EDGAR HEAP OF BIRDS,** Exit Art, 578 Broadway (through Oct. 6); **LISA HEIN** (through Oct. 6) and **ANA MENDIETA** (through Oct. 27), Hearn, 39 Wooster St.; **ELGA HEINZEN,** Henoch, 80 Wooster St. (through Oct. 13); **RALPH HUMPHREY,** Boone, 417 West Broadway (through Oct. 6); **PATRICK IRELAND,** Cowles, 420 West Broadway (through Oct. 6); **ANISH KAPOOR,** Gladstone, 99 Greene St. (through Oct. 6); **ANDREW MASULLO,** Fiction-Nonfiction, 21 Mercer St. (through Oct. 6); **KATHLEEN MC CARTHY,** Gracie Mansion Gallery, 532 Broadway (through Oct. 6); **VICTOR MIRA,** Dorsky, 578 Broadway (through Oct. 25); **PIETER LAURENS MOL,** Louver, 130 Prince St. (through Oct. 6); **RICHARD NONAS,** Burgin, 130 Prince St. (through Oct. 20); **CLIFFTON PEACOCK,** Germans van Eck, 420 West Broadway (through Oct. 13); **TIM PRENTICE,** Maxwell Davidson, 415 West Broadway (through Oct. 27); **PRUITT/EARLY,** 303 Gallery, 89 Greene St. (through Oct. 6); **WADE SAUNDERS,** Brown, 560 Broadway (through Oct. 6); **ROBERT STACKHOUSE,** Dolan Maxwell, 154 Wooster St. (through Oct. 6); **MASAMI TERAOKA,** Auchincloss, 558 Broadway (through Oct. 13); **EUGENE VON BRUENCHENHEIN,** Thorp, 103 Prince St. (through Oct. 13); **MARGARET WHARTON,** Kind, 136 Greene St. (through Oct. 17).

PHOTOGRAPHY

UNEVEN work can be compelling because of what it reveals about the talent of its creator. Sylvia Plachy's "Unguided Tour"—just published by Aperture, and titled after her column in the *Village Voice*—is a case in point. This book—and the related exhibition at Burden (20 East 23rd Street; through October 27)—demonstrates that Plachy is capable of insight and originality in her picturemaking, but also of superficiality. It's Plachy's portraits that shine. Her photograph of Tom Waits (wh has provided the music on the flexidisk that comes with the book) reverberates with his idiosyncratic energy, while her picture of Don King is almost luminescent, rendering his hair as if it were a halo. And Plachy's shots of Rainer Fassbinder and Virgil Thomson are relaxed and anchored, communicating a sense of pleasure in the way both men let their paunches hang out, like trophies.

Beyond the portraits are plenty of other strong images. There's wit in the photo called "Rhino Video"—a shot that displays more filming equipment than animal. There's irony, in a picture of a driving range, showing an area littered with golf balls that have been directed toward a poster of Ayatollah Khomeini. But elsewhere Plachy can be a bit too easy on herself; she often goes with the shot that illustrates a cliché. Her images can also seem self-consciously political or sociological—didactic points rather than found images. That's a shame, because she's so obviously capable of an independent outlook.

MAN RAY (1890-1976)—A show, titled "Man Ray/Bazaar Years: *A Fashion Retrospective*," that contains more than this heading may suggest. Fashion and advertising turn out to have been natural stimuli for Man Ray's Surrealist vocabulary. What could be more surreal than a lipstick story featuring a closeup of a thirties beauty—in black-and-white, except for hot-red lips—with the boldface headline "THE RED BADGE OF COURAGE"? Through Nov. 25. (International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 8.)

SHORT LIST—JOHN BALDESSARI, Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway (through Oct. 13); **WERNER BISCHOF,** International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6; through Nov. 11); **LARRY CLARK,** Luhring Augustine, 130 Prince St. (through Oct. 13); **BOB COLACELLO,** Boone, 417 West Broadway (through Oct. 6); **MICHAEL EASTMAN,** Witkin, 415 West Broadway (opens at noon on Saturdays, through Oct. 20); **EVERGON,** Shainman, 560 Broadwa (through Oct. 6); **CANDIDA HÖFER,** Klagsbru, 51 Greene St. (through Oct. 6); **MARK KLETT** and **NAN GOLDIN,** Pace-MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. (through Oct. 20); **KEN LUM,** Rosen, 130 Prince St. (through Oct. 13); **JOEL MEYEROWITZ,** Danziger, 415 West Broadway (through Oct. 13); **RYUJI MIYAMOTO** and **HIROSHI OSAKA,** Min-Lowinsky, 584 Broadway (through Oct. 31); **RICHARD ROSS,** Lieberman & Saul, 155 Spring St. (opens at noon on Saturdays, through Oct. 6); **MICHAEL SCOTT,** Sikkema, 155 Spring St. (opens at noon on Saturdays, through Oct. 13); **KENNETH SNELSON** and **NICHOLAS NIXON,** Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (open Mondays, through Oct. 6); **THOMAS STRUTH,** Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through Oct. 13); **JOSEF SUDEK,** Photofind, 138 Spring St. (through Oct. 20); **SUSAN UNTERBERG,** Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. (through Oct. 13).

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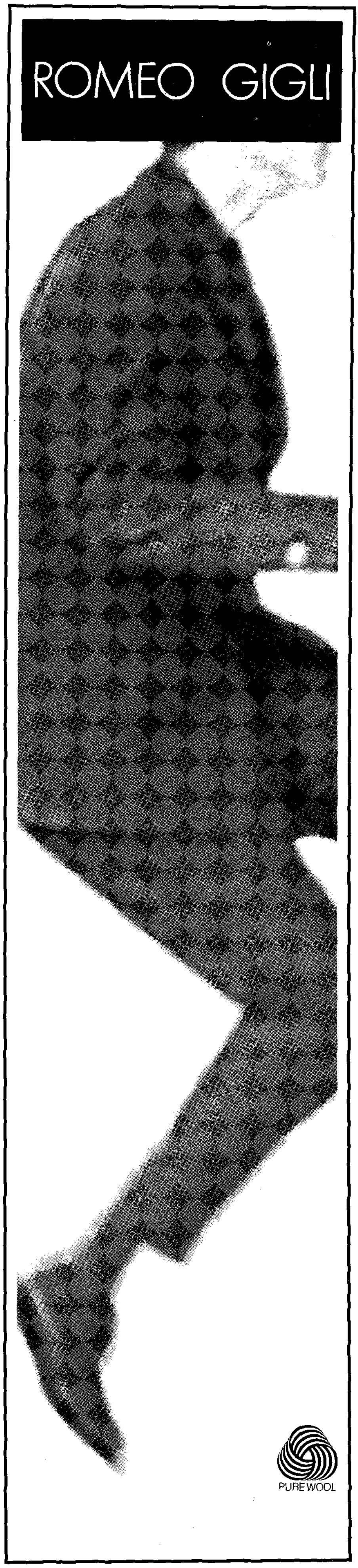
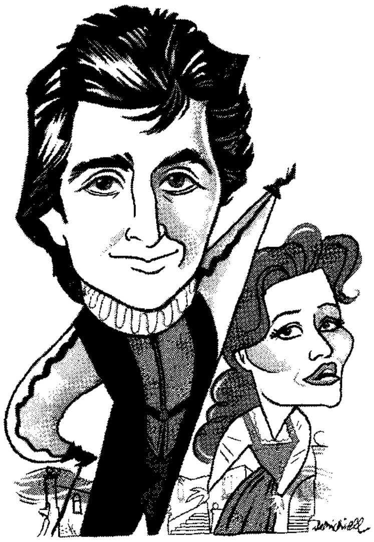


MUSIC

DANIEL BARENBOIM is not, as far as *we know, generally considered an* enigmatic figure, but we are beginning to think of him that way. What we like best about him is his comfort with the idea of music-making as a substantive intellectual endeavor. When he talks about the place of an orchestra in the cultural life of a city, as he did when his directorate of the Chicago Symphony was announced, he sounds not like a civic booster but like a man critically conversant with the other fine arts. He is not afraid of seriousness. (He was, after all, the child prodigy who played a Beethoven sonata cycle at seventeen, and, more recently, he was brash enough to suggest to the *Times* that a symphonic concert is to be addressed to people who, were the concert cancelled, would not select a Broadway show instead but sit home reading Goethe.) Yet he is no conservative: in opera, he has cast his lot with avant-garde stage direction (Harry Kupfer for a catchall "Ring" at Bayreuth; the brothers Christopher and David Alden for a project now being worked out in Chicago). He has kept his hand in at piano playing, choosing interesting projects for himself. And his interpretations bespeak fruitful intercourse with the great musicians he observed in youth, especially Furtwängler and Rubinstein.

But for all this he does seem sometimes to fall right in with the superstar crowd that fills its schedule with overwhelming amounts of lucrative activity. When he brought the Orchestre de Paris to New York after shaping its work for fourteen years, in four lofty programs of Wagner, late Beethoven, Mozart, Stravinsky, and Berlioz, nobody here seemed to think the playing sounded very good, and he has at times allowed a measure of sloppiness to invade his keyboard work. When he was dismissed from the Bastille Opera in a dispute over costs, salaries, and artistic control, the press outside France seemed to assume that this was a debacle for Paris, but a certain note of relief was detectable in local accounts. What will this multitalented but sometimes erratic musician make of the Chicago Symphony and of the remaining years of his career (likely to be many, as he is still among the youngest of major music directors)? We will be thinking about all this on October 3, when he plays concertos with the Philharmonic, and on October 10, when he gives a piano recital at Carnegie Hall.



At the Met, Jerry Hadley and June Anderson in "Rigoletto"

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Avery Fisher Hall 874-2424; and for Carnegie Hall 247-7800.)

OPERA

METROPOLITAN OPERA—**DON GIOVANNI,** with Cheryl Studer, Patricia Schuman, Hans Peter Blochwitz, Thomas Hampson, and Paul Plishka; conducted by James Levine. (Oct. 1 and Oct. 5 at 8.) . . . **LA BOHÈME,** with Mirella Freni, Barbara Daniels, Placido Domingo, and Brian Schexnayder; Christian Badea. (Oct. 2 at 8 and Oct. 6 at 1:30.) . . . With *Mirella Freni, Barbara Daniels, Placido* Domingo, and Gordon Hawkins; Christian Badea. (Oct. 10 at 8.) . . . **RIGOLETTO,** with June Anderson, Jerry Hadley, and Juan Pons; Guido Ajmone-Marsan. (Oct. 3 and Oct. 6 at 8.) . . . **DER ROSENKAVALIER,** with Felicity Lott, Anne Sofie von Otter, Barbara Bonney, Luciano Pavarotti, and Aage Haugland; Carlos Kleiber. (Oct. 4 and Oct. 9 at 7:30.) . . . **BORIS GODUNOV,** with Stefania Toczyska, Gary Lakes, Philip Langridge, Paata Burchuladze, and Sergei Koptchak; Emil Tchakarov. (Oct. 8 at 8.)

NEW YORK CITY OPERA—**MADAME BUTTERFLY,** with Elizabeth Holleque, Robynne Redmon, Martin Thompson, and Eugene Perry; conducted by Mark Gibson. (Oct. 2 and Oct. 6 at 8.) . . . **MOSES UND ARON,** Schoenberg's most extensive opera (rich in twelve-tone methodology), written between 1928 and 1932. With Richard Cross and Thomas Young; Christopher Keene. (Oct. 3 and Oct. 10 at 8; and Oct. 6 at 2.) . . . **LA FANCIULLA DEL WEST,** a revival of Puccini's pistol-packing spaghetti Western, *with Linda Roark-Strummer, Stefano* Algieri, and Louis Manikas; Arthur Fagen. (Oct. 5 at 8.) . . . **LA BOHÈME,** with Michèle Boucher, Linda Zoghby, Robert Brubaker, and Carlos Serrano; Joseph Colaneri. (Oct. 7 at 2.) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

ORCHESTRAS

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC—At Avery Fisher Hall. Oct. 2 at 7:30: Zubin Mehta conducts music by Barber (including "Knoxville: Summer of 1915") and Richard Strauss, with soprano Marvis Martin. . . . ¶ Oct. 3 at 8: Zubin Mehta conducts Weber's "Oberon" Overture, plus concertos by Beethoven and Tchaikovsky, with pianist Daniel Barenboim (a benefit concert). . . . ¶ Oct. 4 and Oct. 6 at 8, and Oct. 5 at 11 A.M.: Music by David Del Tredici and Richard Strauss, plus Mozart's Fifth Violin Concerto (with Vladimir Spivakov); Zubin Mehta conducting. . . . ¶ Oct. 10 at 8: Leonard Slatkin conducts music by William Schuman, Saint-Saëns, and Beethoven (his Third Piano Concerto, with soloist John Browning).

PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA—Riccardo Muti conducts symphonies by Tchaikovsky and Richard Wernick, as well as Bruch's G-Minor Violin Concerto, with Kyung Wha Chung. (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 2 at 8.)

NEW YORK CHAMBER SYMPHONY—Gerard Schwarz conducting music by David Diamond, Beethoven, and Gershwin (his "Rhapsody in Blue," with Misha Dichter). (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. Oct. 6 and Oct. 9 at 8, and Oct. 7 at 3.)

ROYAL CONCERTGEBOUW ORCHESTRA OF AMSTERDAM—At Carnegie Hall, Riccardo Chailly conducting. Oct. 5 at 8: A Rossini overture, Brahms' Fourth Symphony, and Luciano Berio's "Rendering," based on sketches for a Tenth Symphony that Franz Schubert jotted down in the final weeks of his brief life. Mr. Berio describes his work as neither a completion nor a reconstruction but rather a "restoration," in which his own orchestrations of Schubert's sketches are connected by a newly composed "musical cement that comments on the discontinuities and the gaps." . . . ¶ Oct. 6 at 8: Schumann's Fourth Symphony and Mahler's "Das Lied von der Erde," with mezzo-soprano Jard van Nes and tenor Gösta Winbergh. . . . ¶ Oct. 7 at 3: Music by Beethoven, Prokofiev, and Johan Wagenaar.

"The Battle of Britain"—The BBC Concert Orchestra, the BBC Singers, and the Band of the Royal Air Force (all directed by Kenneth Alwyn) perform a fiftieth-anniversary salute to the popular and classical music that won the war. (Avery Fisher Hall. Oct. 8 at 8.)

Czech Philharmonic Orchestra—An orchestra much in the news during last year's "Prague Revolution," presenting Martinů's Sixth Symphony ("Fantaisies Symphoniques"), a suite from Stravinsky's "Firebird," and Chopin's Second Piano Concerto, with Andrea Lucchesini. Jiří Bělohlávek conducts. (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 9 at 8.)

RECITALS

Mstislav Rostropovich—Cello, performs Bach's fifth unaccompanied suite and, with pianist Lambert Orkis, music by Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, Prokofiev, and Piazzolla (his "Le Grand Tango"). (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 1 at 8.)

Juilliard String Quartet—Music of Schubert, including the C-Major Quintet (with guest cellist Bernard Greenhouse). (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 3 at 8.) . . . ¶ Quartets by Schubert, Ravel, and Elliott Carter. (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. Oct. 8 at 8. For information about tickets, call 874-7515.)

Tian Jiang—Piano, performing music by Brahms, Chou Wen-Chung, and others. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. Oct. 4 at 8.)

Amherst Saxophone Quartet—Performing arrangements of Bach, Gershwin, and Eubie Blake; an original work by Lukas Foss; and, with Mr. Foss at the piano, a transcription of Mozart's Piano Quintet, K. 452. (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. Oct. 4 at 8.)

Takács String Quartet—Playing Haydn, Bartók, and Beethoven (his Op. 130 and "Grosse Fuge"). (Weill Recital Hall. Oct. 5 at 8.)

Glenn Gould Retrospective—A series of the pianist's discussion-recitals filmed for broadcast on Canadian and French television between 1960 and 1970. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Oct. 5 at 8, and Oct. 6 at 3 and 7.)

Sequentia—Seven singers from the Cologne-based ensemble perform medieval polyphony, from ninth-century improvised sequences to the monumental *organa* of Perotin and his thirteenth-century Parisian contemporaries. (Corpus Christi Church, W. 121st St., just east of Broadway. Oct. 7 at 4. For information about tickets, call 666-0675.)

Alfredo Kraus—The Spanish tenor's program includes operatic arias, traditional Spanish songs, and zarzuela excerpts. With pianist José Tordesillas. (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 7 at 8.)

Judson Griffin—Baroque violin, performing music of Biber, Tartini, Bach, and others. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. Oct. 8 at 8.)

Daniel Barenboim—Piano, performing Bach's First Partita and Beethoven's "Diabelli Variations." (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 10 at 8.)

JAZZ / POP / ROCK
PERSONAL APPEARANCES

Michael Franks—On his early albums, this creamy-voiced singer-songwriter combined clever wordplay, which sometimes sounded like the kind of private baby talk that lovers invent, with jazz-pop charts in a style somewhere between late Steely Dan and the Crusaders. On his latest album, "Blue Pacific," Franks seems to have left the Blossom Dearie quirkiness far behind. The new tunes are romantic-yuppie reveries—a perfect soundtrack for an *Architectural Digest* shoot at a Malibu beach house. ("Vincent's Ear" must be the world's first heartwarming song about a severed appendage.) For the sake of his concert audience, one hopes that his former self will win out over the purveyor of mellow-CD product. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. Oct. 5-6 at 8.)

Phil Collins—Madison Square Garden. 563-8300. Oct. 1-2 at 8.

SPORTS

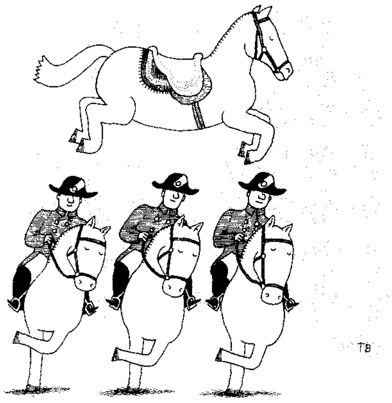
HOME TEAMS

Yankees—Vs. the Detroit Tigers, Oct. 1-3 at 7:30. For information about tickets, call Yankee Stadium, 293-6000.

Jets—Away until Oct. 14, when they face the San Diego Chargers.

Giants—Away until Oct. 21, when they face the Phoenix Cardinals.

Rangers—Vs. the Minnesota North Stars, Oct. 8. . . . ¶ Vs. the Washington Capitals, Oct. 10. (Game time, 7:30. For information about tickets, call Madison Square Garden, 563-8000.)



The Lipizzan stallions at the Nassau Coliseum

RACING

Horses—At Belmont: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1. The Jockey Club Gold Cup, the Champagne, and the Frizette are on Oct. 6. The Beldame and the Turf Classic are on Oct. 7. Through Oct. 29. . . . At the Meadowlands: Weeknights at 7:30. . . . **Trotting** at Yonkers Raceway: Weeknights at 8, and Tuesdays at 1.

CHAMPIONSHIPS—BASEBALL AND CHESS

Playoffs—Barring any one-game divisional playoffs, the National League playoffs start on Oct. 4 at the home of the Western Division champs, and the American League playoffs start on Oct. 6 at the home of the Eastern Division champs.

Chess—The first half of the world chess championship, between Garry Kasparov and Anatoly Karpov, will begin on Oct. 8 at 5:30 at the Hudson Theatre, 141 W. 44th St. (The second half will be in Lyons, France.) For information about tickets, call 1-800 388-5464.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Stallions—The world-famous Lipizzan stallions perform what can best be described as equine ballet: they leap and pirouette to classical music. (Nassau Coliseum. 1-516 422-9222. Oct. 4-6 at 8, and Oct. 7 at 2.)

Animal Attraction—The highlight of the Feast of St. Francis is the blessing of the animals, and those in line to be blessed will include various zoo animals, a petri dish full of one-celled organisms, and innumerable household pets. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 116th St. Oct. 7 at 11. No tickets necessary.)

Readings and Talks—At the Gas Station: Mary Gaitskill and Matilde Daviú, Oct. 3 at 8. . . . Francisco Goldman and Jaime Manrique, Oct. 4 at 8. . . . Toni Morrison and Nelida Piñon, Oct. 5 at 8. (2nd St., at Ave. B. Tickets at the door on the nights of the readings.) . . . ¶ At the 92nd Street Y: Octavio Paz reads from his own poems and essays, in Spanish. Eliot Weinberger reads the translations. Oct. 8 at 8:30. (Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440.). . . ¶ At Endicott Booksellers: T. Coraghessan Boyle reads from his new novel, "East Is East," Oct. 9 at 8. (450 Columbus Ave., at 81st St. No tickets necessary.). . . ¶ At the Donnell Library Auditorium: Stanley Burnshaw will read from his own prose, Oct. 9 at 6. (20 W. 53rd St. No tickets necessary.). . . ¶ At the New York Public Library: Jamaica Kincaid will give a talk called "Seeing England for the First Time," Oct. 10 at 6. (Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. 930-0571.)

Memoranda—The Cathedral Antiques Show, an addition to the antiques-show season, will be held Oct. 5-7 at St. Vartan's Cathedral, Second Ave. at 34th St. For more information, call 686-0710. . . . ¶ Columbus Day will be observed on Oct. 8.

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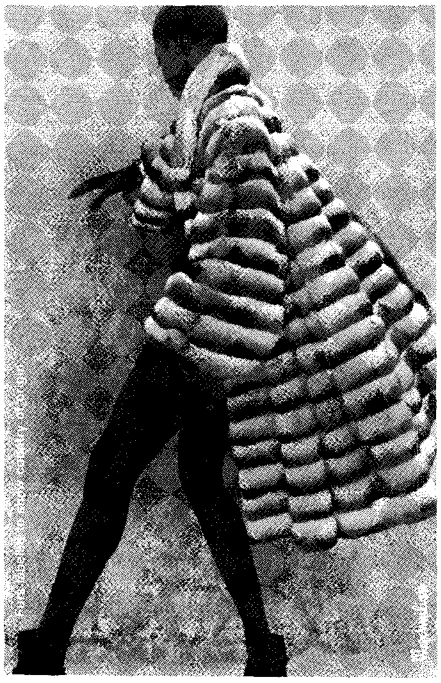

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 29.

EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)
Theatre 1: "Pump Up the Volume" (directed by Allan Moyle), with Christian Slater, Samantha Mathis, Scott Paulin, Ellen Greene, Mimi Kennedy, and Annie Ross.
Theatre 2: "After Dark, My Sweet" (James Foley), with Jason Patric, Rachel Ward, and Bruce Dern.
Theatre 3: "Akira Kurosawa's Dreams" (†).
Theatre 4: "King of New York" (Abel Ferrara), with Christopher Walken, David Caruso, Larry Fishburne, and Wesley Snipes.
Theatre 5: "Wild at Heart" (†).
Theatre 6: "The Tall Guy" (†).

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
"Landscape in the Mist" (Theo Angelopoulos; in Greek).

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Narrow Margin" (Peter Hyams), with Gene Hackman and Anne Archer.
Theatre 2: Through Oct. 4: "Funny About Love" (Leonard Nimoy), with Gene Wilder, Christine Lahti, and Mary Stuart Masterson. From Oct. 5: "Miller's Crossing" (Joel Coen), with Gabriel Byrne, Albert Finney, Marcia Gay Harden, Jon Polito, and John Turturro.
Theatre 3: "GoodFellas" (†).

Bijou Cinema, 3rd Ave. between 12th and 13th. (505-7320)
"Backstreet Dreams" (Rupert Hitzig), with Brooke Shields, Jason O'Malley, and Sherilyn Fenn.

Loews 19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)
Theatre 1: "GoodFellas" (†).
Theatre 2: "State of Grace" (Phil Joanou), with Sean Penn, Ed Harris, Gary Oldman, and Robin Wright.
Theatre 3: "Ghost" (†).
Theatre 4: "King of New York" (Abel Ferrara), with Christopher Walken, David Caruso, Larry Fishburne, and Wesley Snipes.
Theatre 5: "Narrow Margin" (Peter Hyams), with Gene Hackman and Anne Archer.
Theatre 6: Through Oct. 4: "Funny About Love" (Leonard Nimoy), with Gene Wilder, Christine Lahti, and Mary Stuart Masterson. From Oct. 5: "Desperate Hours" (Michael Cimino), with Mickey Rourke, Anthony Hopkins, Mimi Rogers, Lindsay Crouse, and Kelly Lynch.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
Through Oct. 4: "The Tall Guy" (†).
From Oct. 5: "Fantasia" (1940), a Walt Disney film.

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Postcards from the Edge" (Mike Nichols), with Meryl Streep, Shirley MacLaine, Dennis Quaid, Gene Hackman, and Richard Dreyfuss.

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Ghost" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Oct. 4: "Funny About Love" (Leonard Nimoy), with Gene Wilder, Christine Lahti, and Mary Stuart Masterson. From Oct. 5: "Desperate Hours" (Michael Cimino), with Mickey Rourke, Anthony Hopkins, Mimi Rogers, Lindsay Crouse, and Kelly Lynch.
Theatre 3: "State of Grace" (Phil Joanou), with Sean Penn, Ed Harris, Gary Oldman, and Robin Wright.

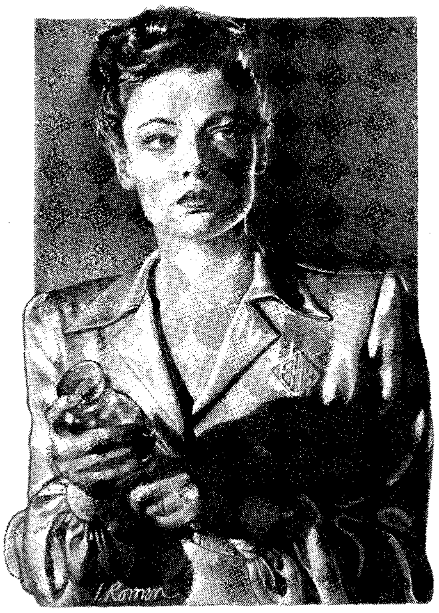
34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Pacific Heights" (John Schlesinger), with Melanie Griffith, Matthew Modine, and Michael Keaton.

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"King of New York" (Abel Ferrara), with Christopher Walken, David Caruso, Larry Fishburne, and Wesley Snipes.

Sutton 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Theatre 1: Through Oct. 4: "Hardware" (Richard Stanley), with Dylan McDermott and Stacey Travis. From Oct. 5: "Fantasia" (1940), a Walt Disney film.
Theatre 2: "The Tall Guy" (†).

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Pacific Heights" (John Schlesinger), with Melanie Griffith, Matthew Modine, and Michael Keaton.

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
Through Oct. 4: "After Dark, My Sweet" (James Foley), with Jason Patric, Rachel Ward, and Bruce Dern.
From Oct. 5: "The Fifth Monkey" (Eric Rochat), with Ben Kingsley.



Gene Tierney in
"Leave Her to Heaven"

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "Texasville" (Peter Bogdanovich), with Jeff Bridges, Cybill Shepherd, and Annie Potts.
Theatre 2: Through Oct. 4: "I Come in Peace" (Craig R. Baxley), with Dolph Lundgren. From Oct. 5: "Marked for Death" (Dwight H. Little), with Steven Seagal, Joanna Pacula, and Keith David.

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Flatliners" (†).

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: Through Oct. 4: "Don't Tell Her It's Me" (Malcolm Mowbray), with Steve Guttenberg. From Oct. 5: "Henry & June" (†).
Theatre 2: "Miller's Crossing" (Joel Coen), with Gabriel Byrne and Albert Finney.

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: "GoodFellas" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Oct. 4: "Presumed Innocent" (†). From Oct. 5: "Listen Up: The Lives of Quincy Jones" (Ellen Weissbrod), a documentary.
Theatre 3: "Interrogation" (Richard Bugajski, in Polish).

Gemini 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Narrow Margin" (Peter Hyams), with Gene Hackman and Anne Archer.
Theatre 2: Through Oct. 4: "The Freshman" (Andrew Bergman), with Matthew Broderick and Marlon Brando. From Oct. 5: "Avalon" (Barry Levinson), with Armin Mueller-Stahl, Elizabeth Perkins, Joan Plowright, and Aidan Quinn.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Postcards from the Edge" (Mike Nichols), with Meryl Streep and Shirley MacLaine.

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "State of Grace" (Phil Joanou), with Sean Penn, Ed Harris, Gary Oldman, and Robin Wright.
Theatre 2: "Funny About Love" (Leonard Nimoy), with Gene Wilder, Christine Lahti, and Mary Stuart Masterson.

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"White Hunter, Black Heart" (Clint Eastwood), with Eastwood, Jeff Fahey, George Dzundza, and Alun Armstrong.

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
Through Oct. 4: "Ghost" (†).
From Oct. 5: "Desperate Hours" (Michael Cimino), with Mickey Rourke, Anthony Hopkins, Mimi Rogers, Lindsay Crouse, and Kelly Lynch.

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Funny About Love" (Leonard Nimoy), with Gene Wilder, Christine Lahti, and Mary Stuart Masterson.

Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)
Theatre 1: Through Oct. 4: "Don't Tell Her It's Me" (Malcolm Mowbray), with Steve Guttenberg. From Oct. 5: "Marked for Death" (Dwight H. Little), with Steven Seagal, Joanna Pacula and Keith David.
Theatre 2: "I Come in Peace" (Craig R. Baxley), with Dolph Lundgren.

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "GoodFellas" (†).
Theatre 2: "Texasville" (Peter Bogdanovich), with Jeff Bridges, Cybill Shepherd, and Annie Potts.

WEST SIDE

Film Forum, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Theatre 1: Through Oct. 9: "Berkeley in the Sixties" (directed by Mark Kitchell), a documentary. From Oct. 10: "Bakayaro! I'm Plenty Mad" (1988, in Japanese), four episodes by four directors.
Theatre 2: See listings under Revival Houses.
Theatre 3: Through Oct. 4: "Solaris" (1976, Andrei Tarkovsky; in Russian). . . . ¶ Oct. 5-8: "The Miracle of Morgan's Creek" (1944, Preston Sturges), with Betty Hutton and Eddie Bracken; and "The Great McGinty" (1940, Sturges), with Brian Donlevy and Akim Tamiroff. . . . ¶ Oct. 9-10: "The Miracle of Morgan's Creek"; and "The Great Moment" (1944, Sturges), with Joel McCrea, Betty Field, and Harry Carey.

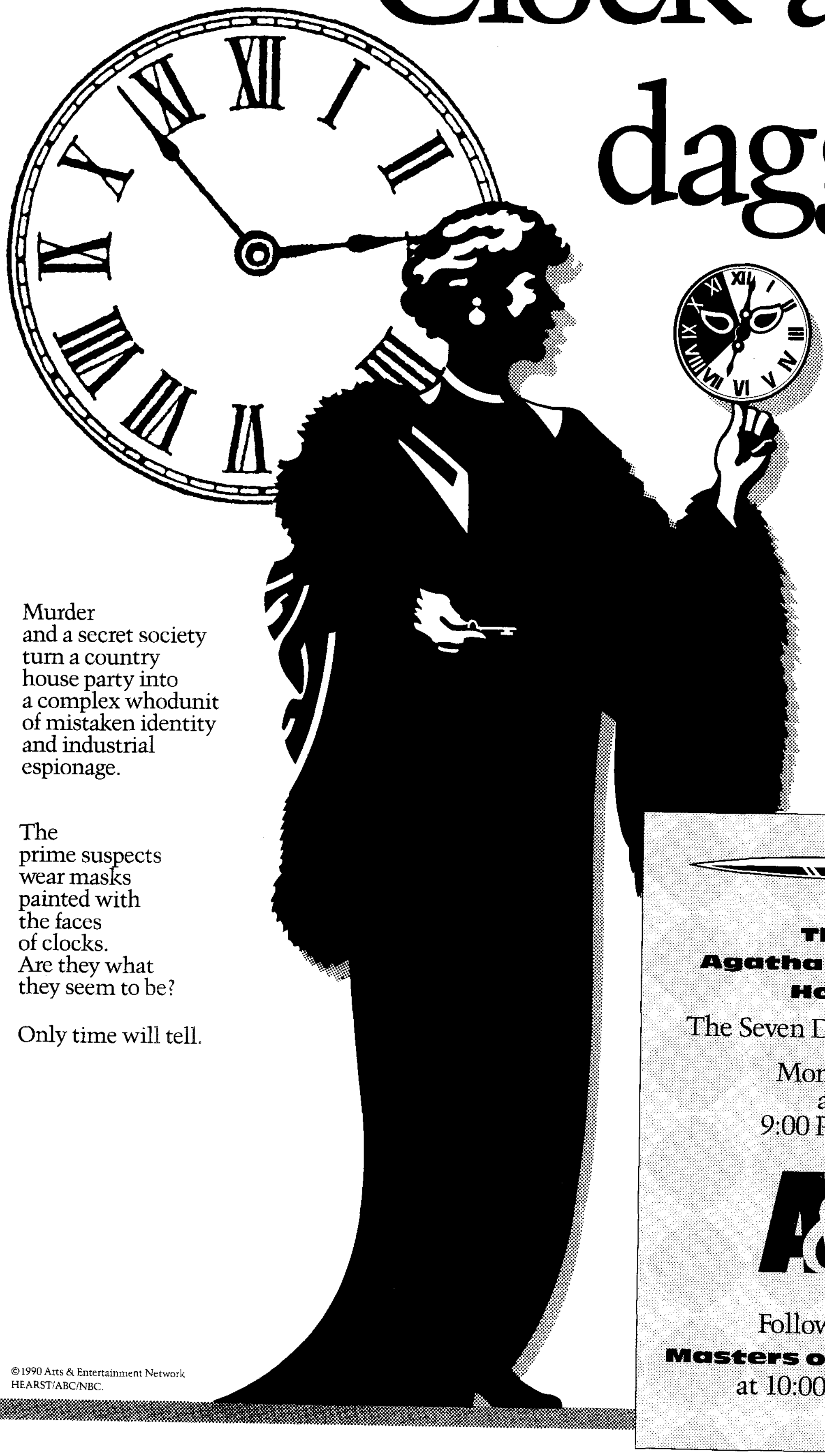
Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "Pacific Heights" (John Schlesinger), with Melanie Griffith, Matthew Modine, and Michael Keaton.
Theatre 2: "Ghost" (†).

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515)
"White Hunter, Black Heart" (Clint Eastwood), with Eastwood, Jeff Fahey, George Dzundza, and Alun Armstrong.

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: Through Oct. 4: "Postcards from the Edge" (Mike Nichols), with Meryl Streep and Shirley MacLaine. From Oct. 5: "Henry & June" (†).
Theatre 2: "Texasville" (Peter Bogdanovich), with Jeff Bridges, Cybill Shepherd, and Annie Potts.

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "The Witches" (†).
Theatre 2: "Presumed Innocent" (†).
Theatre 3: "Cinema Paradiso" (Giuseppe Tornatore; in Italian).
Theatre 4: "Hardware" (Richard Stanley), with Dylan McDermott and Stacey Travis.

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)
Theatre 1: "Pacific Heights" (John Schlesinger), with Melanie Griffith, Matthew Modine, and Michael Keaton.
Theatre 2: Through Oct. 4: "Don't Tell Her It's Me" (Malcolm Mowbray), with Steve Guttenberg, Jami Gertz, and Kyle MacLachlan. From Oct. 5: "Henry & June" (†).
Theatre 3: Through Oct. 4: "Hardware" (Richard Stanley), with Dylan McDermott and Stacey Travis. From Oct. 5: "Listen Up: The Lives of Quincy Jones" (Ellen Weissbrod), a documentary.
Theatre 4: "Postcards from the Edge" (Mike Nichols), with Meryl Streep and Shirley MacLaine.
Theatre 5: "Flatliners" (†).
Theatre 6: "Texasville" (Peter Bogdanovich), with Jeff Bridges, Cybill Shepherd, and Annie Potts.
Theatre 7: "Pacific Heights."



Clock and dagger.

Murder
and a secret society
turn a country
house party into
a complex whodunit
of mistaken identity
and industrial
espionage.

The
prime suspects
wear masks
painted with
the faces
of clocks.
Are they what
they seem to be?

Only time will tell.

**The
Agatha Christie
Hour**

The Seven Dials Mystery

Mondays
at
9:00 PM ET

A&E®

Followed by
Masters of Mystery
at 10:00 PM ET

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HEARST/ABC/NBC.

MOVIE HOUSES—Cont'd

Theatre 8: "Wild at Heart" (†).

Theatre 9: Through Oct. 4: "Postcards from the Edge." From Oct. 5: "Marked for Death" (Dwight H. Little), with Steven Seagal, Joanna Pacula, and Keith David.

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)

Theatre 1: "I Come in Peace" (Craig R. Baxley), with Dolph Lundgren.

Theatre 2: "Backstreet Dreams" (Rupert Hitzig), with Brooke Shields, Jason O'Malley, and Sherilyn Fenn.

Theatre 3: "Presumed Innocent" (†).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)

Through Oct. 4: "Pretty Woman" (†).

From Oct. 5: "Fantasia" (1940), a Walt Disney film.

Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)

Theatre 1: Through Oct. 4: "Hardware" (Richard Stanley), with Dylan McDermott and Stacey Travis. From Oct. 5: "Henry & June" (†).

Theatre 2: "Flatliners" (†).

Theatre 3: Through Oct. 4: "Don't Tell Her It's Me" (Malcolm Mowbray), with Steve Guttenberg. From Oct. 5: "Marked for Death" (Dwight H. Little), with Steven Seagal, Joanna Pacula, and Keith David.

Theatre 4: "Texasville" (Peter Bogdanovich), with Jeff Bridges, Cybill Shepherd, and Annie Potts.

Theatre 5: "Backstreet Dreams" (Rupert Hitzig), with Brooke Shields, Jason O'Malley, and Sherilyn Fenn.

Theatre 6: "After Dark, My Sweet" (James Foley), with Jason Patric, Rachel Ward, and Bruce Dern.

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)

"Postcards from the Edge" (Mike Nichols), with Meryl Streep and Shirley MacLaine.

Loews Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)

"King of New York" (Abel Ferrara), with Christopher Walken, David Caruso, Larry Fishburne, and Wesley Snipes.

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)

"Akira Kurosawa's Dreams" (†).

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)

"Fools of Fortune" (Pat O'Connor), with Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, Iain Glen, and Julie Christie.

Carnegie Screening Room, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (757-2131)

"May Fools" (†).

Loews Fine Arts, 4 W. 58th. (980-5656)

"Metropolitan" (Whit Stillman), with Edward Clements, Carolyn Farina, Christopher Eigeman, and Taylor Nichols.

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)

"Backstreet Dreams" (Rupert Hitzig), with Brooke Shields, Jason O'Malley, and Sherilyn Fenn.

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)

"Ghost" (†).

62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)

"Pacific Heights" (John Schlesinger), with Melanie Griffith, Matthew Modine, and Michael Keaton.

Lincoln Plaza 1, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)

Theatre 1: "The Icicle Thief" (Maurizio Nichetti; in Italian), with Nichetti.

Theatre 2: "Cinema Paradiso" (Giuseppe Tornatore; in Italian), with Philippe Noiret and Salvatore Cascio.

Theatre 3: "Life and Nothing But" (Bertrand Tavernier; in French), with Philippe Noiret, Sabine Azema, and Pascale Vignal.

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)

"Postcards from the Edge" (Mike Nichols), with Meryl Streep and Shirley MacLaine.

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)

Theatre 1: "State of Grace" (Phil Joanou), with Sean Penn, Ed Harris, Gary Oldman, and Robin Wright.

Theatre 2: "King of New York" (Abel Ferrara), with Christopher Walken, David Caruso, Larry Fishburne, and Wesley Snipes.

Theatre 3: Through Oct. 4: "Narrow Margin" (Peter Hyams), with Gene Hackman and Anne Archer. From Oct. 5: "Fantasia" (1940), a Walt Disney film.

Theatre 4: Through Oct. 4: "Presumed Innocent" (†). From Oct. 5: "Desperate Hours" (Michael Cimino), with Mickey Rourke, Anthony Hopkins, Mimi Rogers, Lindsay Crouse, and Kelly Lynch.

Theatre 5: "GoodFellas" (†).

Theatre 6: Through Oct. 4: "Funny About Love" (Leonard Nimoy), with Gene Wilder, Christine Lahti, and Mary Stuart Masterson. From Oct. 5: "Listen Up: The Lives of Quincy Jones" (Ellen Weissbrod), a documentary.

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)

Theatre 1: "I Come in Peace" (Craig R. Baxley), with Dolph Lundgren.

Theatre 2: "Texasville" (Peter Bogdanovich), with Jeff Bridges, Cybill Shepherd, and Annie Potts.

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)

Theatre 1: "Backstreet Dreams" (Rupert Hitzig), with Brooke Shields, Jason O'Malley, and Sherilyn Fenn.

Theatre 2: Through Oct. 4: "Don't Tell Her It's Me" (Malcolm Mowbray), with Steve Guttenberg. From Oct. 5: "Marked for Death" (Dwight H. Little), with Steven Seagal, Joanna Pacula, and Keith David.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)

Theatre 1: "GoodFellas" (†).

Theatre 2: "Mo' Better Blues" (†).

Theatre 3: "Narrow Margin" (directed by Peter Hyams), with Gene Hackman and Anne Archer.

Theatre 4: "Def by Temptation" (James Bond III).

Theatre 5: "Presumed Innocent" (†).

Theatre 6: "Pacific Heights" (John Schlesinger), with Melanie Griffith, Matthew Modine, and Michael Keaton.

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)

"State of Grace" (Phil Joanou), with Sean Penn, Ed Harris, Gary Oldman, and Robin Wright.

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)

Theatre 1: Through Oct. 4: "Funny About Love" (Leonard Nimoy), with Gene Wilder, Christine Lahti, and Mary Stuart Masterson. From Oct. 5: "Desperate Hours" (Michael Cimino), with Mickey Rourke, Anthony Hopkins, Mimi Rogers, Lindsay Crouse, and Kelly Lynch.

Theatre 2: "Death Warrant" (Deran Sarafian), with Jean-Claude Van Damme.

Theatre 3: "Delta Force 2." (Aaron Norris), with Chuck Norris.

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)

"King of New York" (Abel Ferrara), with Christopher Walken, David Caruso, Larry Fishburne, and Wesley Snipes.

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)

Theatre 1: "I Come in Peace" (Craig R. Baxley), with Dolph Lundgren.

Theatre 2: Through Oct. 4: "Hardware" (Richard Stanley), with Dylan McDermott and Stacey Travis. From Oct. 5: "Marked for Death" (Dwight H. Little), with Steven Seagal, Joanna Pacula, and Keith David.

West Side Cinema 1 and 2, 7th Ave. at 48th. (398-1720)

Theatre 1: "White Hunter, Black Heart" (Clint Eastwood), with Eastwood, Jeff Fahey, George Dzundza, Alun Armstrong, and Marisa Berenson.

Theatre 2: "The Witches" (†).

REVIVAL HOUSES

Biograph Cinema, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)

Oct. 1: "Here Comes the Groom" (1951, directed by Frank Capra), with Bing Crosby, Jane Wyman, Alexis Smith, and Franchot Tone; and "Good News" (1947, Charles Walters), with June Allyson and Peter Lawford.

Oct. 2-3: "Let Freedom Ring" (1939, Jack Conway), with Virginia Bruce, Nelson Eddy, Lionel Barrymore, Edward Arnold, and Victor McLaglan; and "Where Do We Go From Here?" (1945, Gregory Ratoff), with June Haver, Fred MacMurray, Anthony Quinn, and Joan Leslie.

Oct. 4-6: "The King and I" (1956, Walter Lang), with Deborah Kerr and Yul Brynner.

Oct 7-8: "Lili" (†) and "Hans Christian Andersen" (†).

Oct. 9-10: "With a Song in My Heart" (1952, Walter Lang), with Susan Hayward, Rory Calhoun, David Wayne, and Thelma Ritter; and "Tonight and Every Night" (1945, Victor Saville), with Rita Hayworth, Lee Bowman, Janet Blair, Marc Platt, and Florence Bates.

Film Forum 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)

Oct. 1: "The Lady Eve" (1941, Preston Sturges), with Barbara Stanwyck, Henry Fonda, and Charles Colburn; and "Remember the Night" (1940, Mitchell Leisen), with Stanwyck and Fred MacMurray.

Oct. 2-3: "If I Were King" (1938, Frank Lloyd), with Ronald Colman, Frances Dee, and Ellen Drew; and "We Live Again" (1934, Rouben Mamoulian), with Fredric March, Anna Sten, Jane Baxter, and C. Aubrey Smith.

Oct. 4-5: "The Thirty-Day Princess" (†) and "The Good Fairy" (†).

Oct. 6-7: "The Sin of Harold Diddlebock" (1947, Preston Sturges), with Harold Lloyd; and "The Great Moment" (1944, Sturges), with Joel McCrea, Betty Field, and Harry Carey.

Oct. 8: "Mad Wednesday" (1950, Preston Sturges), with Harold Lloyd; and "The Great Moment."

Oct. 9: "Port of Seven Seas" (1939, James Whale), with Wallace Beery, Maureen O'Sullivan, John Beal, and Frank Morgan; and "Letters from My Windmill" (1955 Marcel Pagnol; in French).

Oct. 10: "Port of Seven Seas"; and "The Notebooks of Major Thompson" ("The French They Are a Funny Race"; 1947, Preston Sturges), with Martine Carol, Jack Buchanan, and Noël-Noël.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

Oct. 1: "Through a Glass Darkly" (1962, Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Harriet Andersson, Gunnar Björnstrand, Max von Sydow, and Lars Passgård; and "The Silence" (1964, Bergman), with Ingrid Thulin and Gunnel Lindblom.

Oct. 2: "Fat City" (1972, John Huston), with Stacy Keach and Jeff Bridges; and "Beat the Devil" (1954, Huston), with Humphrey Bogart, Jennifer Jones, Gina Lollobrigida, Robert Morley, and Peter Lorre.

Oct. 3: "An American in Paris" (1951, Vincente Minnelli), with Gene Kelly, Leslie Caron, Oscar Levant, and Nina Foch; and "Rhapsody in Blue" (1945, Irving Rapper), with Joan Leslie, Robert Alda, Alexis Smith, and Oscar Levant.

Oct. 4: "The Nanny" (1965, Seth Holt), with Bette Davis, Jill Bennett, and Wendy Craig; and "What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?" (1962, Robert Aldrich), with Davis, Joan Crawford, and Victor Buono.

Oct. 5-6: "Masculine Feminine" (1965, Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Jean-Pierre Léaud and Chantal Goya; and "A Married Woman" (1965, Godard; in French), with Macha Meril.

Oct. 7: "The Throne of Blood" (†); and "The Lower Depths" (1957, Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Toshiro Mifune.

Oct. 8: "Les Enfants Terribles" ("The Strange Ones"; 1949, Jean-Pierre Melville; in French), with Nicole Stéphane and Edouard Dermithe; and "La Faute de l'Abbé Mouret" (1970, Georges Franju; in French).

Oct. 9: "Leave Her to Heaven" (†); and "Rings on Her Fingers" (1942, Rouben Mamoulian), with Gene Tierney, Henry Fonda, Laird Cregar, and Spring Byington.

Oct. 10: "The Last Wave" (†); and "Gallipoli" (1981, Peter Weir), with Mel Gibson, Mark Lee, and Bill Kerr.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490)—Oct. 1 at 2:30: "Talk of the Town" (1942, directed by George Stevens), with Jean Arthur, Cary Grant, and Ronald Colman. . . . ¶ Oct. 1 at 6: "Satan in Sables" (1925, James Flood; silent), with Lowell Sherman, John Harron, and Pauline Garon. . . . ¶ Oct. 2 at 2:30: "Zoo in Budapest" (1933, Rowland V. Lee), with Loretta Young, Gene Raymond, and O. P. Heggie. . . . ¶ Oct. 2 at 6 and Oct. 4 at 2:30: "The Yellow Ticket" (1931, Raoul Walsh), with Laurence Olivier, Elissa Landi, and Lionel Barrymore. . . . ¶ Oct. 4 at 6: "Talk of the Town." . . . ¶ Oct. 5 at 2:30: "Satan in Sables." . . . ¶ "The Civil War" (1990, Ken Burns, who will be present on Oct. 5 at 6), a documentary: Oct. 5 at 6 and Oct. 6 and 8 at noon: "Episode 1: The Cause, 1861." . . . Oct. 6 and 8 at 2:30: "Episode 2: A Very Bloody Affair, 1862" and "Episode 3: Forever Free, 1862." . . . Oct. 6 and 8 at 5:30: "Episode 4: Simply Murder, 1863" and "Episode 5: The Universe of Battle, 1863." . . . Oct. 7 at noon and Oct. 9 at 2: "Episode 6: Valley of the Shadow of Death, 1864" and "Episode 7: Most Hallowed Ground, 1864." . . . Oct. 7 at 4 and Oct. 9 at 6: "Episode 8: War Is All Hell, 1865" and "Episode 9: The Better Angels of Our Better, 1865."

New York Film Festival—The final programs in a series of international films—**ALICE TULLY HALL:** Oct. 1 at 6:15: "A Woman's Revenge" (Jacques Doillon, France). . . . ¶ Oct. 1 at 9:30 and Oct. 2 at 6:15: "Taxi Blues" (Pavel Lounguine, U.S.S.R.). . . . ¶ Oct. 2 at 9:15: "Nouvelle Vague" (Jean-Luc Godard, Switzerland/France). . . . ¶ Oct. 3 at 6:15: "The Match Factory Girl" (Aki Kaurismäki, Finland). . . . ¶ Oct. 3 at 9: "Listen Up: The Lives of Quincy Jones" (Ellen Weissbrod, United States). . . . ¶ Oct. 4 at 6:15: "An Angel at My Table" (Jane Campion, New Zealand). . . . ¶ Oct. 4 at 9:45: "I Hired a Contract Killer" (Aki Kaurismäki, Finland). . . . ¶ Oct. 5 at 6:15: "Golden Braid" (Paul Cox, Australia). . . . ¶ Oct. 5 at 9:15 and Oct. 6 at 12:30: "To Sleep with Anger" (Charles Burnett, United States). . . . ¶ Oct. 6 at 3:30: "Golden Braid." . . . ¶ Oct. 6 at 6:30: "American Dream" (Barbara Kopple, United States). . . . ¶ Oct. 6 at 9:30: "An Angel at My Table." . . . **AVERY FISHER HALL:** Oct. 7 at 8:30: "The Nasty Girl" (Michael Verhoeven, West Germany). (For tickets, call 362-1911.)

Anthology Film Archives, 32-34 Second Ave., at Second St. (477-2714)—Films showing in either the Courthouse Theatre or the Maya Deren Theatre. Oct. 1-2 at 7, Oct. 3-7 at 9, Oct. 8-9 at 7, and Oct. 10 at 9: "Permanent Vacation" (1980, Jim Jarmusch). . . . ¶ Oct. 3 at 7: A program of short films by Fernand Léger, Dudley Murphy, Marcel Duchamp, and Man Ray. . . . ¶ Oct. 4-5 at 7 and Oct. 6 at 10:30: "The Glory Stompers" (1967, Anthony M. Lanza), with Dennis Hopper, Jody McCrea, Chris Noel, and Lindsay Crosby. . . . ¶ Oct. 4 and 6 at 9 and Oct. 7 at 7: "The Born Losers" (1967, Tom Laughlin), with Laughlin. . . . ¶ Oct. 6 at 7 and Oct. 7 at 9: "Angels Die Hard" (1970, Richard Compton), with Tom Baker. . . . ¶ Oct. 5 at 9 and Oct. 6 at 7: "Force of Circumstances" (1989, Lisa Baer). . . . ¶ Oct. 10 at 7: "There Was a Father" (1942, Yasujiro Ozu; in Japanese). . . . ¶ Oct. 10 at 9: "Triumph of the Will" (1934-35, Leni Riefenstahl).

Donnell Library Center, 20 W. 53rd St. (621-0619)—Oct. 2 at noon: "The Maltese Falcon" (1941, John Huston), with Humphrey Bogart, Mary Astor, Sydney Greenstreet, Elisha Cook, Jr., and Peter Lorre. . . . ¶ Oct. 2 at 2:30: "The Cat and the Canary" (1927, Paul Leni; silent), with Creighton Hall and Laura La Plante. . . . ¶ Oct. 4 at noon: "The Man You Loved to Hate" (1979, Patrick Montgomery). . . . ¶ Oct. 4 at 6: "Long Shot" (1990, Lynn Hershman). . . . ¶ Oct. 9 at noon: "The African Queen" (1951, John Huston), with Humphrey Bogart and Katharine Hepburn. . . . ¶ Oct. 9 at 2:30: "Nosferatu, the Vampyre" (†).

Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—Oct. 3 at 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, and 9:30: "Camille Claudel" (1988, Bruno Nuytten; in French), with Isabelle Adjani, Gérard Depardieu, Madeleine Robinson, and Alain Cuny. . . . ¶ Oct. 10 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "The Music Teacher" (1989, Gérard Corbiau; in French), with José Van Dam, Anne Roussel, Sylvie Fennec, and Patrick Bauchau.

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—"From Harlem to Hollywood: American Race Movies, 1912-48." Oct 6 at 2: "Body and Soul" (1925, Oscar Micheaux; silent), with Paul Robeson. . . . ¶ Oct. 6 at 4: "Eleven P.M." (1925, Richard Maurice; silent). . . . ¶ Oct. 7 at 2: "Ten Nights in a Bar Room" (1926, silent), with Charles Gilpin. . . . ¶ Oct. 7 at 4: "The Scar of Shame" (1927, Frank Peregrini; silent), with Lucia Lynn Moses.

Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., State Office Building, 163 W. 125th St. (873-5040)—Oct. 4 at 1 and 4:05: "Malcolm X: By Any Means Necessary," a documentary; and "The Education of Sonny Carson" (1974, Michael Campus), with Rony Clanton, Don Gordon, Paul Benjamin, and Mary Alice. . . . ¶ Oct. 4 at 6:30: "Do the Right Thing" (1989, Spike Lee), with Danny Aiello, Lee, Bill Nunn, Ossie Davis, and Ruby Dee; and "She's Gotta Have It" (1986, Lee), with Tracy Camila Johns, Tommy Redmond Hicks, Lee, and John Canada Terrell. . . . ¶ Oct. 5 at 1: "Ida B. Welles: A Passion for Justice" (1989, William Greaves); "The Learning Tree" (1969, Gordon Parks), with Kyle Johnson, Estelle Evans, and Dick Ward; and "Sounder" (1972, Martin Ritt), with Cicely Tyson, Paul Winfield, Kevin Hooks, and Janet MacLachlan. . . . ¶ Oct. 5 at 6:30: "The Spook Who Sat by the Door" (1973, Ivan Dixon), with Lawrence Cook, Paula Kelly, and Janet League; and "Sweet Sweetback's Baadasssss Song" (1973, Melvin Van Peebles), with Melvin Van Peebles, Mario Peebles, and John Amos. . . . ¶ Oct. 6 at 2: "Jazz Is Our Religion" (1972, John Jeremy), with Jo Jones, Dizzy Gillespie, Sunny Murray, and Art Blakey; "Sarah Vaughan: Sass & Brass" (1986, Len Dell'Amico); "Jammin' the Blues" (1944, Gjon Mili); and "Jaki Byard: Anything for Jazz" (1980, Dan Algrant). . . . ¶ Oct. 6 at 6: "L.A. All-Stars" (1971, Jack Lewerke), with Big Joe Turner, Hampton Hawes, and others; "Jazz: Earl Hines and Coleman Hawkins" (1965, Karl Genus); "Sarah Vaughan in Concert" (1984, Phil Olsman); "John Lee Hooker: Mississippi Down Home Blues" (1981, Michael Prussian); and a live performance by Ms. Gerri Hollins and Blue Chips. . . . ¶ Oct. 7 at 2: "Bird" (1988, Clint Eastwood), with Forest Tucker and Diane Venora; and "Charlie Mingus" (1968, Thomas Reichman). . . . ¶ Oct. 7 at 6: "Zydeco Gumbo" (1988, Dan Hildenbrandt), with Clifton Chenier; "Archie Shepp: I Am Jazz" (1984, Frank Cassenti); and "After Hours: Coleman Hawkins and Roy Eldridge" (1959, Shepherd Traube).

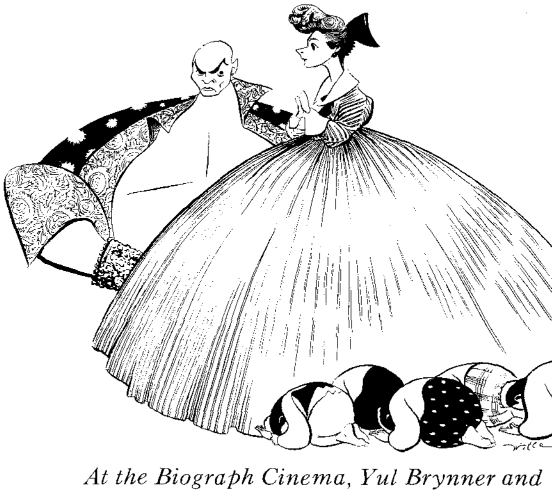
IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.

IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael and Terrence Rafferty.)

Akira Kurosawa's Dreams—Not one of its eight segments feels like a real dream. The kind of power that Kurosawa aims for, and intermittently achieves, in this picture is less oneiric than ceremonial. The film is a succession of sweeping dramatic gestures and lofty incantations performed in an atmosphere of hushed solemnity. The second half of "Dreams" is weak: the fifth episode, "Crows," about a fantasy encounter with van Gogh, is a thin conceit; and the remaining three segments are all static, self-conscious, and didactic. But there's greatness in the film's first hour. The opening segment, "Sunshine Through the Rain," is the vision of a small child who wanders into a forest and witnesses a wedding procession of foxes; the sequence has a wholly original sense of the rapturous fear and awe we feel when we first come upon the wonders of the natural world. The second episode, "The Peach Orchard," is also lovely (though its mood and pace are too similar to those of the first). The third segment, "The Blizzard," about four men trapped in a snowstorm, is all snow, howling-wind effects, and bleak, undifferentiated vistas of despair, until Kurosawa pulls a miracle out of the white void: a woman in long black hair and diaphanous robes appears to the party's leader as he battles sleep. It's a transcendent image, perhaps the most piercing ever made of the desires that keep people from surrendering to death. And the fourth episode, "The Tunnel," about a man returning from war and encountering his dead comrades, is a brilliant, hypnotic piece of filmmaking. With Akira Terao, who plays the dreamer in six of the segments; Mieko Harada as the Snow Fairy; Martin Scorsese as van Gogh; and Chishu Ryu. Cinematography by Takao Saito and Masaharu Ueda. In Japanese.—T.R. (Reviewed in our issue of 9/10/90.) (Angelika Film Center, and 57th St. Playhouse.)

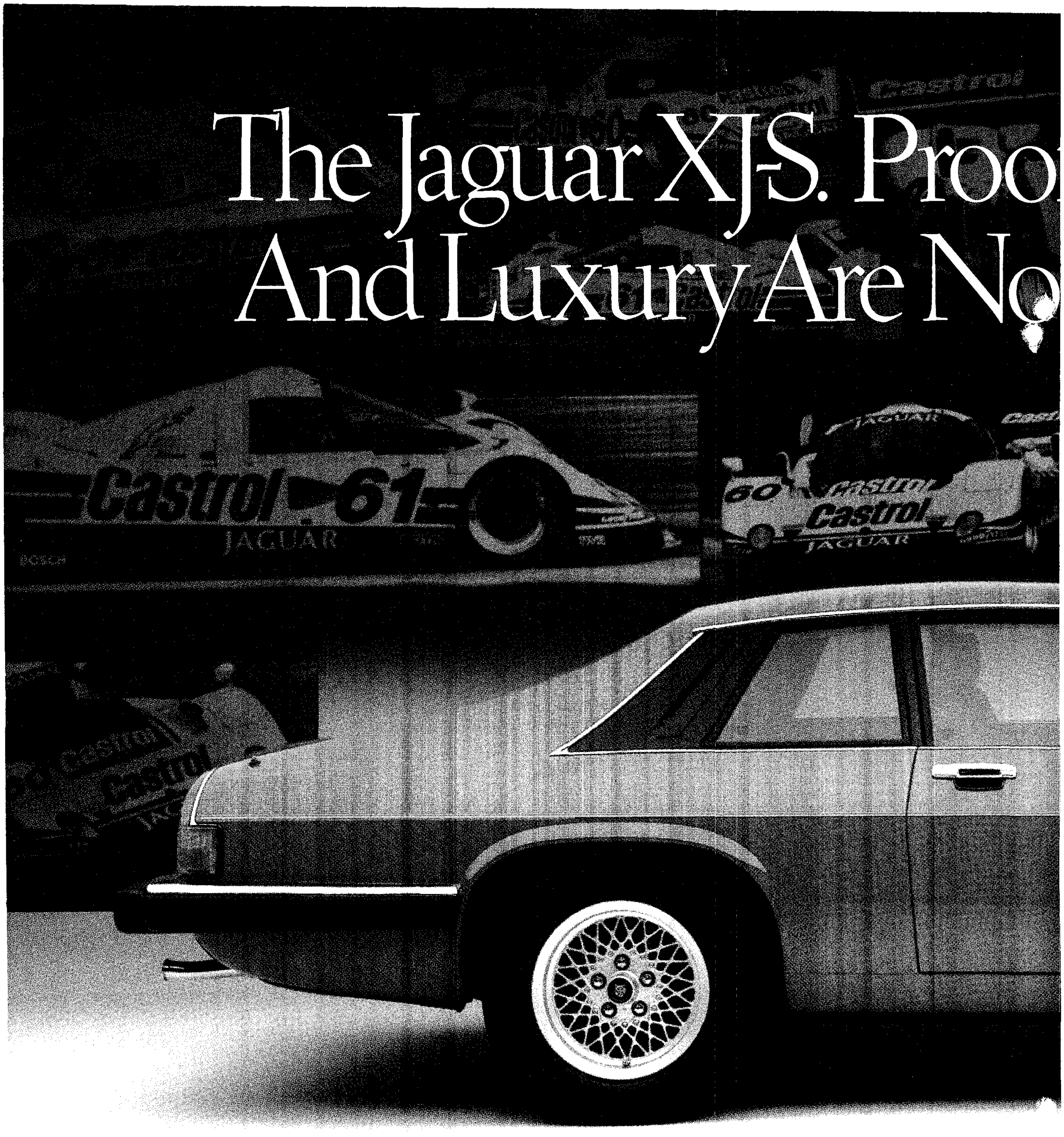


At the Biograph Cinema, Yul Brynner and Deborah Kerr in "The King and I"

Flatliners—This head trip about life after death is staged and shot in a baroque, hallucinatory style, and it moves, but it's unbearably preachy. It's like a small-time Sunday-school lesson conducted in a vast haunted cathedral. Kiefer Sutherland, Julia Roberts, Kevin Bacon, William Baldwin, and Oliver Platt are the Chicago medical students who take part in experiments—stopping and then re-starting their hearts—and learn that in the afterlife they must do penance for the bad things they've done in this one. The picture doesn't even show a sense of humor about Baldwin's sins: videotaping his sexual exploits without getting the women's consent. (Oliver Platt's line readings provide the only entertainment.) The director, Joel Schumacher, seems too gifted (visually) to be working with this soggy screenplay, by Peter Filardi, and this swelling score, by James Newton Howard. The cinematography—heavy on fire and steam and cadavers—is by Jan De Bont; the production design is by Eugenio Zanetti.—P.K. (59th Street East Cinema, Chelsea Cinemas, and Worldwide Cinemas.)

Ghost—It sounds like a horror movie, but it's a romantic fairy tale. The scariest thing about it is its shamelessness. A young New York bank executive, Sam (Patrick Swayze), is killed, on the street, at a moment in his life when everything seems to be going his way. After his death, Sam sticks around, as a spirit (and Swayze stays on screen, as a body). He attends his funeral; watches his beautiful girlfriend, Molly (Demi Moore), drift grief-stricken through the spectacular loft they had just moved into; and then devotes himself to protecting her from the people who killed him. Through a reluctant psychic (Whoopi Goldberg), he tries to communicate with Molly; later, an experienced ghost (Vincent Schiavelli) teaches him how to move objects and break stuff. In this movie, death is treated as if it were merely a form of disability, one of those handicaps we've seen people struggle bravely with in TV movies—something for the individual to triumph over, with will power, hard work, and love. This creamy-toned fantasy, directed by Jerry Zucker from a screenplay by Bruce Joel Rubin, certainly pushes the audience's emotional buttons. It's a twenty-something hybrid of "It's a Wonderful Life" and some of the goofier, more solemn episodes of "The Twilight Zone," and there's not a trace of wit or irony in it. Its images of death have a soothing banality, like a greeting-card message from the world beyond. Also with Tony Goldwyn.—T.R. (7/30/90) (Loews 19th Street East 6, Loews 34th Street Showplace, Waverly, and Loews Paramount. . . . ¶ Loews Tower East; through Oct. 4.)

The Good Fairy (1935)—Hired to sanitize one of Ferenc Molnár's lesser plays, Preston Sturges embroidered the whimsical comedy until it was almost worthy of the talents of Margaret Sullavan. (He also managed to work in one of the movie-within-a-movie scenes that later became one of his trademarks.) Sullavan plays a naïve, unworldly orphan who becomes an usher in a movie theatre; she's so helplessly innocent that various men (Herbert Marshall, Frank Morgan,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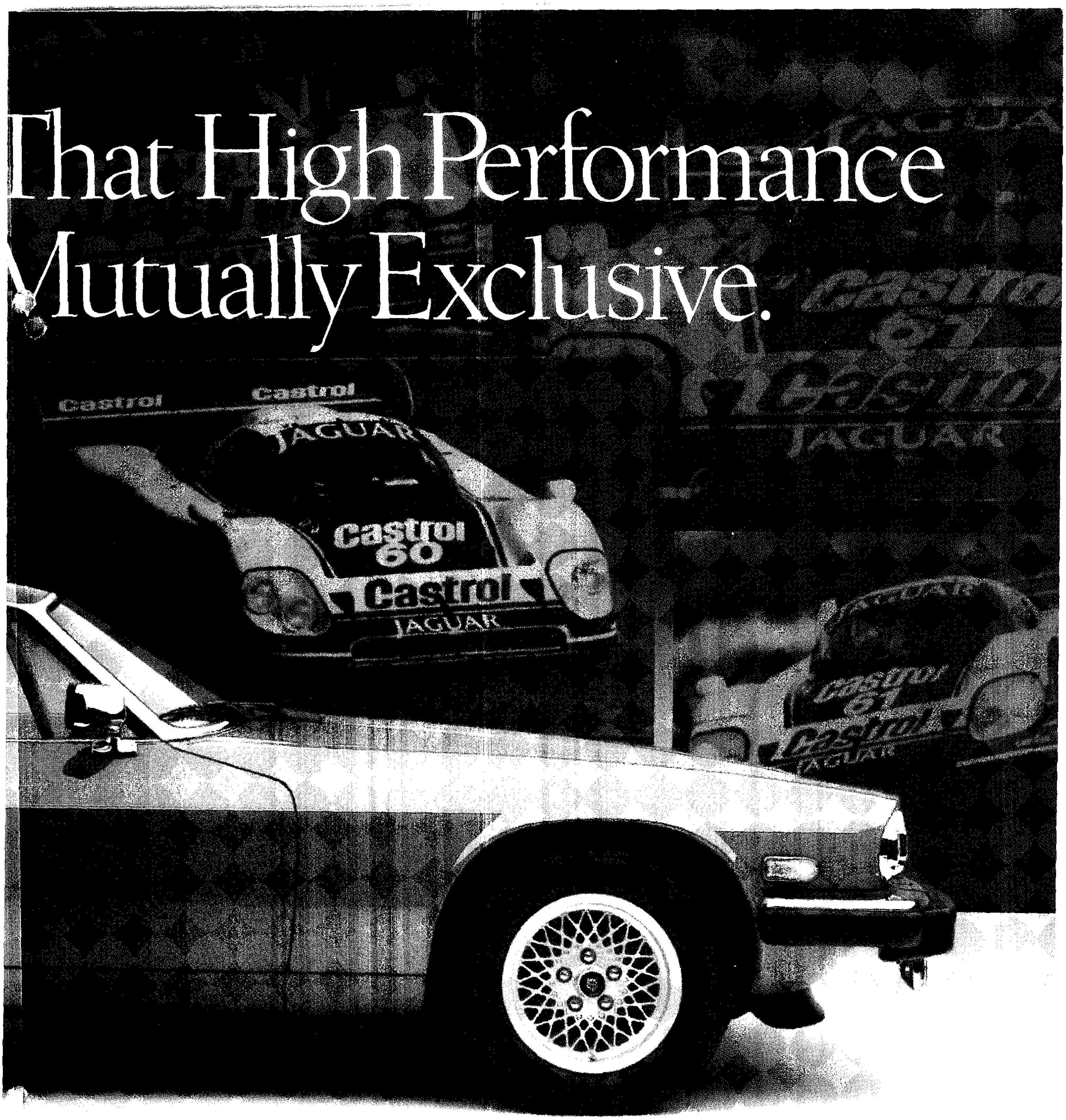
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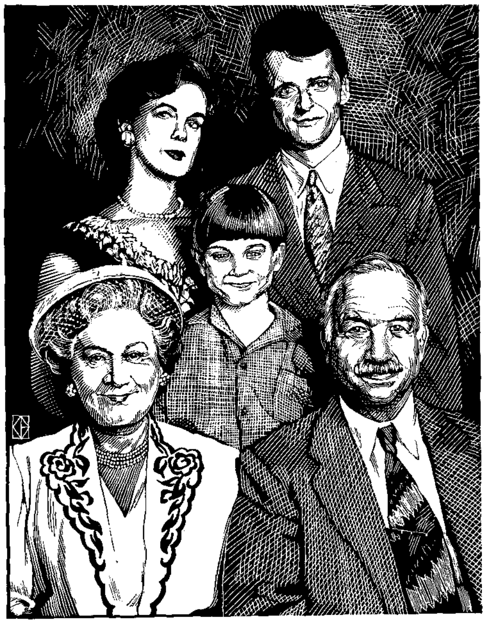
Reginald Owen) come to her aid, and their lives get turned upside down. William Wyler, who directed, has told the story of how he quarrelled with Sullavan at first, and the tension between them made her look nervous and strained in the rushes. In order to improve her appearance he took her out to dinner to make peace, and was so successful that they were married two weeks before the picture was finished. With Cesar Romero, Alan Hale, Beulah Bondi, Eric Blore, and Hugh O'Connell. Cinematography by Norbert Brodine.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; Oct. 4-5.)

GoodFellas—The director, Martin Scorsese, gives you a lift. He loves the Brooklyn organized-crime milieu, because it's where distortion, hyperbole, and exuberance all commingle. His mobsters are high on having a wad of cash in their pockets. The movie is about being cock of the walk, with banners flying and crowds cheering. Based on Nicholas Pileggi's nonfiction book "Wiseguy," it's a triumphant piece of filmmaking—journalism and sociology presented with the brio of drama. But the three major hoods, played by Ray Liotta, Robert De Niro, and Joe Pesci, don't have a strong enough presence, and the movie lacks the juice and richness that come with major performances. (It's like the Howard Hawks "Scarface" without Scarface.) What you respond to is Scorsese's bravura: the filmmaking process becomes the subject of the movie. Watching it is like getting strung out on pure sensation. Paul Sorvino as Paulie and Lorraine Bracco as Karen both come through, and Tony Darrow as a restaurant owner, Welker White as a drug courier who needs her lucky hat to make a coke delivery, and other performers in minor roles give the movie a frenzied, funny texture. The screenplay is by Pileggi and Scorsese; the cinematography is by Michael Ballhaus; the editing is by Thelma Schoonmaker.—P.K. (9/24/90) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Loews 19th Street East 6, Cinema I, 86th Street East Twin, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

Hans Christian Andersen (1952)—Lavish, cloying, pseudo-whimsical monstrosity, contrived by Moss Hart and directed by Charles Vidor, under the aegis of Samuel Goldwyn. It's the conceit of the movie to make Andersen (Danny Kaye) a simpleton bordering on active idiocy. With Zizi Jeanmaire, Roland Petit, Erik Bruhn, Joey Walsh, Farley Granger, and John Qualen. The drippy songs are by Frank Loesser.—P.K. (Biograph Cinema; Oct. 7-8.)

Henry & June—With Fred Ward, Uma Thurman, Maria de Medeiros, and Richard E. Grant; directed by Philip Kaufman. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Baronet, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, and Worldwide Cinemas; starting Oct. 5.)



Joan Plowright, Elizabeth Perkins, Elijah Wood, Aidan Quinn, and Armin Mueller-Stahl in "Avalon"

The Last Wave (1977)—The plot of this Australian film is a throwback to the B movies of the thirties and early forties, and the dialogue—by the young director Peter Weir and his two co-scriptwriters, Tony Morphett and Peter Popescu—is vintage R.K.O. and Universal. Weir provides apparitions holding sacred stones, frog noises in the night, shadows in slow motion, and the kind of haunted-house acting that many of us have a certain affection for. But it's hokum without the fun of hokum; despite all the scare-movie apparatus, this film fairly aches to be called profound. The occult manifestations are linked to the white Australians' guilt over their treatment of the aborigines. The decadent white race is represented by a sickly paleface corporate lawyer (Richard Chamberlain), and the aborigines by a lithe, graceful young man (Gulpilil) and a dignified wily shaman (Nandjiwarra Amagula). The aborigine actors, with their deep-set eyes, are by far the most vital element, yet they're kept on the margins and used as supernatural forces. Weir, who has apparently studied Nicolas Roeg's films, knows how to create an allusive, ominous atmosphere. But the film is overdeliberate and sluggish, and Chamberlain can't stop quivering his lips to connote sensitivity and contracting his nostrils for apprehensiveness and pulling in his cheek muscles for ineffable sorrow. He keeps us conscious that he's acting all the time. His toes act in his shoes. With Olivia Hamnett as the lawyer's wife.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Oct. 10.)

Leave Her to Heaven (1945)—Gothic psychologizing melodrama, so preposterously full-blown and straight-faced that it's a juicy entertainment. Evil, beautiful Ellen (Gene Tierney) hoards her father's ashes and has a penchant for eliminating people who clutter up her life. There are scenes to cherish: Ellen impassively watching her brother-in-law drown; Ellen flinging herself down a flight of stairs to terminate an annoying pregnancy; Ellen going lickety-split on a charger, tossing father's remains around the Technicolored New Mexico landscape; Ellen's long-suffering writer-husband (Cornel Wilde) remarking, "While I was watching you, exotic words drifted across the mirror of my mind as summer clouds stripped across the sky." John M. Stahl directed; Jo Swerling did the adaptation of the Ben Ames Williams best-seller. With Jeanne Crain, Vincent Price, Ray Collins, Gene Lockhart, Reed Hadley, Mary Philips, and Chill Wills.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Oct. 9.)

Lili (1953)—Millions of schoolchildren chirruped "Hi-Lili, Hi-Lo" when this sickly musical whimsy from M-G-M was released. Mel Ferrer smiles his narcissistic, masochistic smile as the crippled puppeteer who can speak his love to the sixteen-year-old orphan girl Lili (Leslie Caron) only through his marionettes. Caron is much too good for him, but the movie doesn't know it. With Jean-Pierre Aumont, Zsa Zsa Gabor, and Kurt Kasznar. Charles Walters choreographed and directed, from Helen Deutsch's script, based on a Paul Gallico novel. Bronislau Kaper was given an Academy Award for that infernal score; Hollywood is shameless.—P.K. (Biograph Cinema; Oct. 7-8.)

May Fools—Louis Malle's new film takes place in May, 1968, when, for a few chaotic weeks, French society seemed on the verge of remaking itself: students were rioting, workers were striking, and the country came to a standstill. The characters in this picture are far removed from the stirring street theatre of May, '68, but they're affected by it nonetheless. The setting is a shabby estate presided over by Milou (Michel Piccoli), a genial man in his sixties who lives the life of a lazy country sensualist: he keeps bees, browns in the sun, and gropes the housekeeper. On the sunny day when the story begins, his mother dies, and he summons the rest of the family for the funeral and the reading of the will. There's a sense that things are about to change, both on the large scale of French society and on the infinitely smaller one of Milou's life. Malle and his co-writer, Jean-Claude Carrière, use the upheaval of May, '68, very deftly: it intrudes on their comedy like distant thunder on a sunny day, but the threatened downpour of Meaning never develops—we get a cooling shower of light ironies instead. Piccoli gives one of the best performances of his long career: he's vigorous and radiantly good-humored. Although its charm sometimes feels a bit too easy, the film is enjoyable throughout. It just bounces along to the rhythm of its remarkable score, composed and played by the eighty-two-year-old jazz violinist Stéphane Grappelli: the movie, like the music, has a delicate swing to it. Also with Miou-Miou and Michel Duchaussoy. In French.—T.R. (7/16/90) (Carnegie Screening Room.)

Mo' Better Blues—The hero of Spike Lee's film is a trumpet player named Bleek Gilliam (Denzel Washington), who is squarely in the tradition of obsessive, single-minded movie jazz musicians. Lee's script presents Bleek with a series of choices, about his love life, his artistic life, and the connections between them. The problem with the picture is that it doesn't frame the hero's choices so that we know what's at stake. And Lee doesn't seem to have thought through the role of the music. He has set the film in the present—in pointed contrast with other recent movies about jazz—but his attitude toward the music's relationship to contemporary culture is incoherent. The picture has a distracted, meandering quality. Denzel Washington's magnetism and intelligence keep the movie watchable even during its most aimless stretches, but the script doesn't allow him to shape the performance. Lee's filmmaking here is all notions and no shape: hard, fierce blowing, rather than real music.—T.R. (8/13/90) (Criterion Center.)

Presumed Innocent—A ponderous adaptation of Scott Turow's cunningly plotted mystery novel. The director, Alan J. Pakula, has shot and paced the movie as if it weren't a mystery but a serious character study, an art film. It's lit (by Gordon Willis) like "Cries and Whispers," only without the bright-red accents: the movie's palette seems to consist of brown and gray—earnest, business-suit colors. The lunacy of treating this story as a deep exploration of character is that the only thing we really want to know about the character in question—Rusty Sabich (Harrison Ford), a Midwestern prosecutor accused of murdering one of his colleagues (Greta Scacchi)—is: Did he do it or not? Ford, in what is probably an unplayable role, has to maintain a tense, repressed, impenetrable expression throughout. Bonnie Bedelia, as Rusty's nervous, self-deprecating wife, gives lovely shadings to a tough part. As the judge presiding over Rusty's trial, Paul Winfield supplies some sorely needed comedy. And Raul Julia, as the hero's lawyer, is an elegant, commanding presence in the courtroom scenes. Also with Brian Dennehy. Screenplay by Pakula and Frank Pierson.—T.R. (8/13/90) (Quad Cinema, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Criterion Center. . . . ¶ Cinema II, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex; through Oct. 4.)

Pretty Woman—The lovers in this romantic comedy, directed by Garry Marshall, are a long-legged, golden-hearted Hollywood Boulevard hooker (Julia Roberts) and a cold, suave corporate raider (Richard Gere). He buys her tasteful (expensive) clothes and shows her how to act "classy"; she opens—in order—his wallet, his fly, and his heart. The only real distinction of this long and rather uneventful diversion is the radical contrast between the stars' performing styles. Roberts is all ebullience and scattershot charm. The kind word for Gere's style is minimal. He's opaque, stubbornly remote: he seems to have faxed his performance in. At its worst, the movie is just unimaginative; at its best, it's pleasant and competent. It's business-as-usual entertainment. Also with Jason Alexander, Laura San Giacomo, Ralph Bellamy, and Hector Elizondo. The screenplay is by J. F. Lawton.—T.R. (Guild; through Oct. 4.)

The Tall Guy—Jeff Goldblum as an American actor in London who has spent six years playing stooge to a detestably smug English comic (Rowan Atkinson) and has lost his confidence and most of his sex drive. Then this gangling wreck is cast as the lead in an Andrew Lloyd Webber-style version of "The Elephant Man"—"Elephant!" the musical. Directed by Mel Smith, from a script by Richard Curtis, this satire of the life of the theatre has a loose, inventive dottiness. Goldblum's wild-eyed sloppy good nature sets off Atkinson's lethal genius at playing an articulate swine, and the whole cast appears to be acting in clover. That includes Emma Thompson, who seems stripped down to pure flakiness, and Geraldine James as a nympho landlady, Hugh Thomas as a diphead doctor,

In Werner Herzog's "Nosferatu, the Vampyre" (playing October 9 at the Donnell Library Center), Klaus Kinski's Dracula wears his craggy bald skull like a crown. His skin is chalky white—after all, it hasn't tanned in centuries. His eyes are as darkly ringed as a Madison Avenue bullterrier's. His mandarin-length nails cast giant spidery shadows, and his cauliflower ears have a few buds missing. This vampire sports a caftan and a round Slavic hat instead of a flapping cape. At first glance he could be a spectral cocktail hostess or a ghoulish priest. The miracle of Kinski's performance is that, despite his bizarre getup, he projects a presence more virile than any Hollywoodian with a shirt unbuttoned to the navel. This Dracula is proud of his separateness, pathetic in his desperate need to find new veins of survival. He doesn't hide his hunger when he sees a human wound; he requests a suck. "It's the oldest remedy in the world," he explains to an astonished visitor.

Kinski is the mainstay in Herzog's clunky remake of F. W. Murnau's 1922 classic. Herzog treats Kinski as an unnatural force; unfortunately, he doesn't give the star enough help. His pacing is too stately, and most of his casting is too pallid (except for the gorgeous Isabelle Adjani, who is the most apt object yet of any big-screen Dracula's affections). The director resorts to crude film trickery, and his touch is so wobbly we can't be certain when he wants us to laugh. One shot suggests what Herzog's "Nosferatu" might have been: an extended, silent take of Dracula's ship gliding into a Dutch town, guided by its red-orange sails, coming to rest at the side of a canal with the sureness of a wolf that's found a long-sought jugular.

Anna Massey as a gleaming smart agent, Kim Thomson as a curly-haired singer, and the insidious Peter Kelly as the smarmy mountebank who stages "Elephant!" Mel Smith turns up in several bits; he's the puffy-faced fellow who looks like a pixie Alfred Hitchcock.—P.K. (9/24/90) (Angelika Film Center, and Sutton. . . . ¶ Gramercy; through Oct. 4.)

Thirty-Day Princess (1934)—A pleasant, trifling romantic comedy. Sylvia Sidney plays Caterina of Taronia, visiting the United States to get some economic help for her country. Sidney also plays Nancy Lane, an American actress hired to impersonate the princess (who has come down with mumps), and to captivate New York's leading newspaper publisher (Cary Grant), who has taken a strong position against aid to Taronia. Grant, still a leading man in this picture (he didn't become a full comedy star until about three years later), is handsome and very engaging, and Sidney—in one of her rare lighthearted performances—is such a skillful technician that you can't distinguish between her technique and her personal charm. (She operates in that area where acting and witchcraft come together.) Marion Gering directed; Preston Sturges, Frank Partos, Sam Hellman, and Edwin Justus Mayer all worked on the inventive, witty script, which was adapted from a Clarence Budington Kelland story. The cast includes Edward Arnold, Vince Bamett, Henry Stephenson, Robert McWade, and Lucien Littlefield. Cinematography by Leon Shamroy.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; Oct. 4-5.)

The Throne of Blood (1957)—Kurosawa's version of "Macbeth" is a virtuoso exercise, as stylized and formalist in its way as Eisenstein's "Ivan the Terrible" movies, though not as ponderous or as inexplicably strange. This is like a demonstration of the uses of violence, décor, pageantry, and costuming, and it's almost a textbook in the techniques for making a movie move. Besides that, it has the great Isuzu Yamada washing her bloody hands, and West or East, there may never be a more chilling Lady Macbeth. Kurosawa is at his playful best when Birnam Wood advances on the castle, and that's just it—he loves this sort of effect so much it's all play. The ending, with Toshiro Mifune's Macbeth stuck full of arrows, like a porcupine-quill cushion, suggests the wildest Kabuki tradition. (Eisenstein was also fascinated by Kabuki.) The action for its own sake can seem like an orgy of masculine delight in warfare. Its greatness is in Kurosawa's glorious bad taste; he flings mad, absurd images on the screen. He has the courage to go over the top. Just one effect seems a mistake: when he uses a mechanical device (slowing down the sound) to simulate a witch's voice. (It's too obvious a trick.) With Takashi Shimura. In Japanese.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Oct. 7.)

Wild at Heart—Right from the start, just about everything is wrong with David Lynch's new movie, and the wrongness has an escalating, vertiginous quality. Every false move seems to lead to another, more disastrous than the one before. It's a buzzing, hyperkinetic picture, but its wildness is all on the surface: the images are elaborately conceived, arresting, and meaningless, like tattoos. The novel by Barry Gifford on which Lynch based his screenplay is a languorous, arty trifle about a pair of lovers named Sailor (Nicolas Cage) and Lula (Laura Dern), who drive from North Carolina to Texas and stop at ratty hotels and motels along the way; they're hard-lovin' losers who smoke a lot and don't get to the place they set out for (California). Their happiness is threatened by a variety of kinky villains, mostly of Lynch's invention: Gifford's poky Deep South odyssey is now an orgy of evil, full of graphic violence and grotesque craziness. The shocks don't have much resonance, though: the weirdness here is inexpressive and trivial, even silly. And the lurid villainy always seems diversionary, a baroque disguise for a bland, lifeless, and overfamiliar story. The movie is one startling lapse of taste after another; it's a sorry spectacle. Also with Diane Ladd, Willem Dafoe, Harry Dean Stanton, Isabella Rossellini, Grace Zabriskie, J. E. Freeman, W. Morgan Sheppard, Calvin Lockhart, David Patrick Kelly, and Crispin Glover.—T.R. (8/27/90) (Angelika Film Center, and Chelsea Cinemas.)

The Witches—The ads say "From the imagination of Jim Henson and director Nicolas Roeg." It would be more accurate to say "From the imagination of the writer Roald Dahl." This quirky fairy-tale movie is about the diabolical, gleeful evil that's hidden behind normality. (It's about women who secretly hate children.) What Henson and Roeg supply is their craftsmanship and their affection for the novel's adult, calmly macabre tone. As the Grand High Witch of the World, the black-clad Anjelica Huston lifts her arm up high in a towering salute and, addressing the witches of England at their annual meeting, held at a seacoast hotel, she outlines her plan: all the children in the land are to be turned into mice. The nine-year-old Luke (Jasen Fisher), who overhears her speech, is hunted down and transformed, but, blessed with a practical-minded Norwegian granny (Mai Zetterling) who's an expert on witches, he sets out to foil the plan. The movie doesn't have Dahl's narrative confidence, and it goes in for a little sweetening, but it has major compensations. Pale, bespectacled Luke is rather mousy to start with, and when he becomes a light-brown critter who can be cradled in his granny's hand it seems almost a fulfillment. His greedy pal Bruno (Charles Potter) seems fulfilled, too—as a blobby gray rodent. The two mice are triumphs for Henson's workshop. Zetterling is the hypnotic storytelling granny of our dreams; Huston is a gutsy, camp witch, with an accent that slips like her features; her terrified underlings—bald, drag-queen witches—are like a child's drawings of the Devil. With Bill Paterson and Brenda Blethyn as Bruno's parents, Rowan Atkinson as the hotel manager, and Jane Horrocks as Miss Irvine. The script is by Allan Scott.—P.K. (Quad Cinema, and West Side Cinema.)

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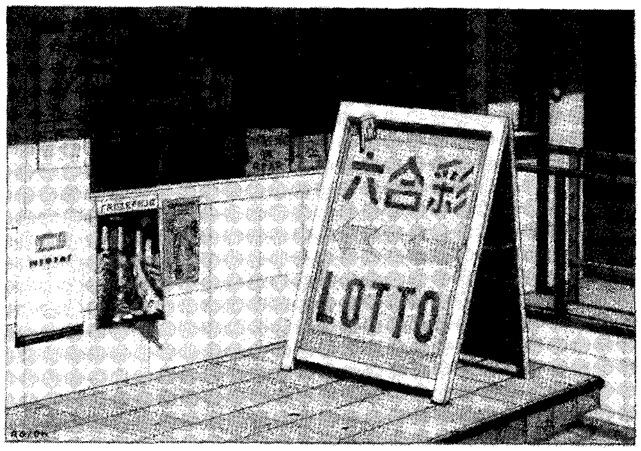
THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

A FRIEND writes:

I went to Boston the other day, mainly to see the Robert Mapplethorpe exhibit "The Perfect Moment" (somehow, I had missed it up and down the line), but I stopped off first, as I usually do when I visit Boston, to pass a few minutes in the Public Garden. There is something abnormally normal about the Public Garden: lovers arm in arm, swan boats filled with tourists, the Bulfinch gold dome of the State House in the distance. A wedding party was being photographed near the bridge over the pond. The bride was a standard beauty wearing a white satin dress, an elaborate veil, and a train so long that I half expected to see a caboose at its far end. A half-dozen bridesmaids were tightly wrapped in electric-magenta gowns, the groom had been poured into an obviously uncomfortable dinner jacket, and an elderly duenna kept darting in and out of the group (which formed and re-formed at the command of a dark-clad photographer with a tripod) to turn back one of the bride's curls or smooth a wrinkle in her gown. A tiny girl of about six stood in front of the ensemble (she, too, was mummified in magenta) as picture after picture was taken, to be pored over by countless family members in years to come. A sullen young man in the party, sporting a pigtail, kept saying, "Get on with it, get on with it." Nearby, I noticed a fountain, its center occupied by the nude statue of a small boy. Water coursed in nervous spurts over his body, including his member. And gazing upon the entire tableau was a huge, heroic equestrian statue of George Washington, benign, tolerant, unmistakably the father of his country.



Obviously, it was time to visit the Mapplethorpe, at the Institute of Contemporary Art, which is on Boylston Street, but far down from the fashionable, smart-shop section, and occupies a renovated Richardson-style police station that is joined to a landmark firehouse. Inside, the Institute was bright and modern, the exhibit beautifully displayed in high-ceilinged rooms. The experience fascinated me: to observe the work of an artist attempting to explain to himself, and to others, the contours of his life. There they all were—the pictures that some people love and some people hate. The self-portraits of Mapplethorpe in various phases of his androgyny. The exquisite flowers, the harrowing portrait of Louise Nevelson, the unclad portrait of a little boy (the one often referred to by really dirty minds as "kiddie porn"), the picture (it's the one that probably keeps Senator Helms tossing and turning) of a black man and a white man hugging each other. The place was crowded. There were elderly women in discreet flowered prints; small children drinking apple juice from baby bottles and being pushed in strollers; men and women in sports shirts and shorts.

"There's the Archbishop of Canterbury and his wife in their garden," a young woman said.

"That's Patti Smith," another said. "She was Mapplethorpe's great friend. I hear she has two children."

"That's the oral-sex one," a young man said, pointing to "Larry and Bobby Kissing, 1979."

Measured by standard time, I was merely a blink away from the wedding party in the Public Garden, but in actuality I had travelled many miles, into a fully documented otherworld. These days, it doesn't take long to go from one to the other, and the line between them, it had become apparent, was as thin as a thread.

I took an elevator to the office of the director, David Ross, an enthusiastic, knowledgeable man of forty-one, who has headed the Institute since 1982. He was in an upbeat mood. Since the Mapplethorpe exhibit opened, in August, it has been visited by more than eighty thousand people; that's more than visited the Institute in all of 1989. Membership now stands at five thousand; last year, it was twenty-one hundred. (Notoriety brings its own rewards.) Ross was also buoyed up by the recent decision of a Boston magistrate to reject an application for a criminal complaint which had been filed by a citizens' group against the Institute and him. Ross told me that the Institute had signed on for the national tour in 1987—two years before Mapplethorpe died, of AIDS, in New England Deaconess Hospital, in Boston. "I knew that this would be a posthumous homage to Mapplethorpe," he said. "Frankly, I never thought of it as controversial. Of course, I know there's a shorthand that says homophobia has replaced Communism as a national demon. And Helms and his advisers have been brilliant in latching on to Mapplethorpe as an issue. Mapplethorpe showed a real world in a real way, and he galvanized and energized the right. They think, of course, in political terms—of win, win, win—and see this as a short-term way to victory. I've learned a lot lately. I've learned, for instance, that many people don't know what a retrospective is. I wasn't around for the big lie in the Hitler days, but I have certainly learned about the big lie these days, as there have been enough semi-truths floating about to confuse the uninitiated. I've learned that there are *qualities* that must be recognized, in addition to quality. Boston has done itself proud. I have been gratified but not surprised by the reaction. After all, the universities here and the high tech have made it a place receptive to *ideas*. District Attorney Shannon spoke out for us, and on the Fourth of July! I feel strongly about these pictures. I feel we have an obligation to represent this kind of loving."

On his desk I noticed a child's watercolor titled "How *Do* Ducks Keep the Sun Out of Their Eyes?" He saw me looking at it. "Done by my twelve-year-old daughter, Lindsay," he said.

"How *do* ducks keep the sun out of their eyes?" I asked.

"Take a look at it yourself, down there in the corner," he said, handing me the picture. Lindsay had painted dark sunglasses on the ducks. Keeps out the light.

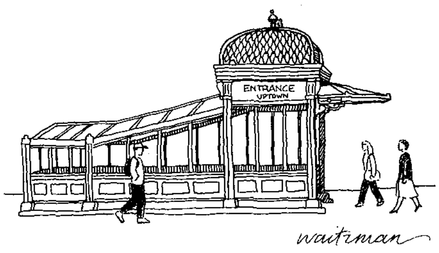
• •

Nacinovich Site

IN the back yard of the Nacinovich house, about three hundred feet from the East River in Astoria, a blue tarp forms a canopy over tables piled with aluminum roasting pans full of bones, shells, pieces of glass (some thick and purplish brown, others thin and stained with translucent color), broken clay pipes, potsherds, bits of Wedgwood, and some stuff in Ziploc bags: an 1861 Indian-head penny, a 1946 Roosevelt dime, buttons, a ceramic doll the size of a child's little finger, a house key, a lead sinker, a shoe buckle, a curtain-rod fixture, one bone die. There are also fragments of quartz and chert—projectile points, skinners, end-scrapers, knives. Edward Platt, the president of the New York Institute of Anthropology and the leader of the dig at the Nacinovich Site, says that some of this stuff has been here since the closing of the Middle Archaic Stage, around 3500 B.C.

Platt, who lives in Jackson Heights, began digging at the Nacinovich Site with a group of volunteers in the summer of 1988, the year before builders broke ground for Shore Towers, a twenty-three-story riverfront condominium now nearing completion next door. While he was surveying the area, noting that the house dated from before the Civil War (1858) and that its site, on elevated land, would have been attractive to prehistoric Indians, he'd had the good fortune to meet the owner of the property, Mario Nacinovich, who gave him permission to dig in the back yard. Mr. Nacinovich, a retired New York City police officer, originally from Yugoslavia, bought the house from his father, who had bought it, in 1951, from a member of the Lawrence family, landowners in Queens since before the Revolution. Mario Nacinovich lives in the house, with his wife, Dorothy, and their son, also Mario Nacinovich, an active New York City police officer. The Nacinoviches—or the Marios, as they're known to the archeologists—have a big black dog named Baron chained up in the back yard; he has a bathtub for a water bowl and barks at intruders.

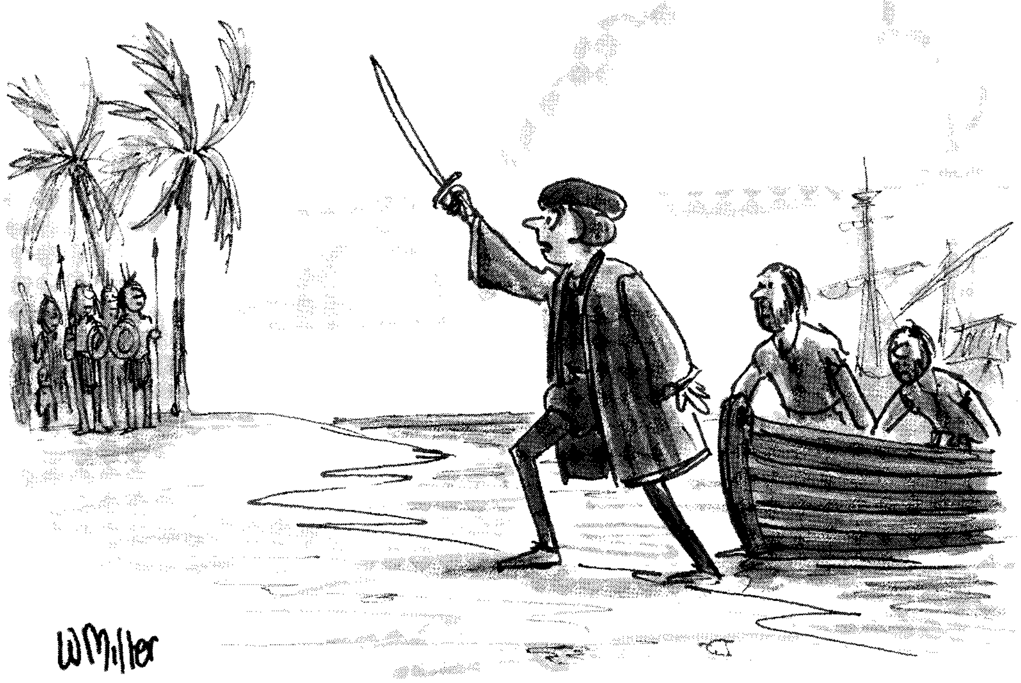
This area is called Pot Cove—it's been called that since before anyone can remember why. Mr. Platt wonders if the name has any connection with an extraordinary number of shards from orange clay flowerpots that have been recovered at the site—far more flowerpots than a single household could have use for. Was there a pot factory here? He has traced the bowls of certain clay pipes to a factory in Staffordshire, England, and from these and from a late-eighteenth-century European wine bottle, both found near a stone foundation in a corner of the yard, he has determined that there was a British encampment here during the Revolutionary War. Before that—way before that—Pot Cove was a seasonal hunting and fishing ground for semi-nomadic Indians. So far, Mr. Platt and his crew have opened up twenty-two test blocks at the Nacinovich Site, each a metre square, and backfilled fourteen of them. "We've been in a layer of ash and refuse," he explains. (Much of archeology turns out to be sorting through the dumpsters of the past.) He adds that he hopes to stay in the field until late October, because Mario is talking about moving to California, and Mr. Platt is sure that if Mario sells the house there will be bulldozers in the back yard within a week.



A new volunteer, Gerhardt Wuest, is scraping away energetically in Test Block 21. The idea is to sift every cubic centimetre of dirt down to the glacial till—the sterile layer of soil left by the last Ice Age. Gerhardt, or Gary, is originally from Germany, and works as a butcher during the week. "He's a good digger," Platt says. "A careful digger." He is also a digger who is not bothered by the heat. "I don't mind sweating," Gary says. "I'm in the cooler all week."

Gary has just made one of the most dramatic finds of the dig: a projectile point—yellow quartz with some orange in it, shaped like a spade, and as sharp as a new-cut tooth. Mr. Platt says that it is of the type called Lamoka, which archeologists have carbon-dated to about 2100 B.C. Gary likes to imagine the man who made it, maybe a little frustrated, sitting on the riverbank chipping at stones. Eventually, Gerhardt Wuest's Lamoka projectile point will go into the catalogue of the Nacinovich Site as No. 178.1, along with exact information about where it was found: the test block, the depth, the soil stratum. At the moment, it is lying on a photographer's black magnetic board, with white letters above it spelling out "NYIA Queens Survey, Block 21, Depth 42 Cm."

Meanwhile, in the driveway, the Mario Nacinoviches are engaged in another form of preservation: pulling dead branches off a tree before they can fall down on the younger Mario's white 1972 Mustang convertible. A rooster, a frequent visitor to the site, hops over the fence from the direction of the condo. "Nobody knows where it came from," Mr Platt says. "It's the Marios' now. It tries to steal the dog's food." The older Mario comes over to see what the archeologists are up to. He's a bluff, broad-faced, courtly man, who, unlike some of his fellow-landowners in Pot Cove—a neighborhood of old mansions and eccentric duplexes giving way to high-rise luxury condos—looks with love on Shore Towers. "This is progress," he says. "Before, it was just a dumping ground." Ed Platt shows him Gary's Lamoka projectile point, and he turns it over in his hand admiringly. "Beautiful," he says, handing it back. "It looks like it was just made, you know what I mean?"



"For the glory of God Almighty, and in the names of the munificent King and munificent Queen of Spain, I do on a day—either a Friday preceding or a Monday directly following a weekend that is earlyish in but toward the middle of October—in this year of our Lord, 1492, claim this land."

• •

Stoki

IF there is one moment that sums up Walt Disney's "Fantasia"—the 1940 film in which symphonic music and cartoon animation are married on a grand scale—it is the silhouetted scene of Mickey Mouse reaching up to a conductor's podium in order to shake the hand of Maestro Leopold Stokowski and thank him for doing a good job. For Mickey, that moment represented the climax of a golden age of musical pictures at Disney—an age that he had ushered in twelve years earlier, with his first starring vehicle, "Steamboat Willie." For Stoki, as musicians called Stokowski, "Fantasia" represented the peak of his ambition to bring classical music to a universal audience through the mass media.

As it happened, "Fantasia" was never quite the success that its creators had envisioned, and over the years it was shortened, the stereophonic Fantasound system was simplified, and the colors faded. This year, for the fiftieth anniversary of "Fantasia," the Disney studios have released a new, completely refurbished print, including a reprocessed version of the original Fantasound. The new version was given its première in Philadelphia last month, at a gala presented by the Curtis Institute of Music. Since its founding, in 1924, the Philadelphia conservatory has supplied the Philadelphia Orchestra with many of its musicians, and it was members of the Philadelphia Orchestra, along with Curtis students, who played under Stokowski in the film.

When we arrived at the reception that kicked off the gala evening, we discovered that the talk of the black-tie crowd was Mickey Mouse, who had recently flown in from the Disney studios along with Corrin Maure, a young, engaging Disney representative. Gary Graffman, the director of the Curtis Institute, told us that Mickey had already visited the school. "Did he play an instrument?" we asked. "No," Mr. Graffman said, and he pointed out that although Mickey was human-size (he stood about five feet six inches from heels to ears), he had only a thumb and three fingers under those white gloves. Soon Mickey appeared at the reception, with Ms. Maure on his arm, but he was unavailable for comment. By Disney rules, he does not talk directly to members of the public while he is on duty.

At dinner, we found ourself seated next to Sol Schoenbach, a tall, genial man with a thatch of white hair and a lot of stories. Between 1937 and 1957, he served as the principal bassoonist of the Philadelphia Orchestra. It is Mr. Schoenbach's bassoon you hear in the insinuating solo that opens "The Rite of Spring" on the "Fantasia" soundtrack. He remembers doing about forty-five takes of that solo before Stoki was satisfied. At the time, Mr. Schoenbach told us, he didn't realize how much of a pioneer in the recording world Stokowski was, and he disapproved of the Maestro's collaboration with Disney. He also questioned some of Stokowski's orchestral experiments. "Most of us thought he was kidding," he said. "But he was after a continuous musical line. He didn't want interruptions, even with breathing. I would take a breath while the next person kept on playing. I think of the way railroad tracks are made now—they're welded together, so you don't hear any clackety-clack. Stoki wanted a seamless sound. And he got it, didn't he?" Mr. Schoenbach took a sip of gazpacho and said, "A lot of people thought Stokowski was a faker, doing things for show. But he had a concept—to get the music to the people. He felt that there was a huge population out there that was not part of music, and he was going to pull it in by hook or by crook.”

Not everyone thanked Stoki for his efforts, and one who didn’t was Igor Stravinsky, whose “Rite of Spring” Stokowski had altered in structure and tempo for “Fantasia.” Mr. Schoenbach told us, “Once, after Stravinsky got to know me, he said, ‘I’ve just been engaged by the Philadelphia Orchestra. What should I conduct?’ I said, ‘ “The Rite of Spring.” It’s a great work and we haven’t done it since Stokowski.’ Stravinsky said, ‘Stokowski!’ So I said, ‘I didn’t hear your music until Stokowski recorded it.’ Stravinsky said, ‘That’s not my music—that’s Stokowski’s music.’ ” Mr. Schoenbach added, “It sure sounded better with Stokowski. Stravinsky was a terrible conductor.”

We asked Mr. Schoenbach to compare Stokowski with Arturo Toscanini, who had conducted the orchestra frequently.

“Toscanini was strictly Apollonian,” Mr. Schoenbach said. “He was interested only in the exactness of the music—no stories, just what the composer indicated. His approach had such understatement. But the music was on fire. Stokowski was a colorist—I think it came from his days of playing the organ, when he could change the instrument to get different sounds. I think he played the orchestra like an organ.”

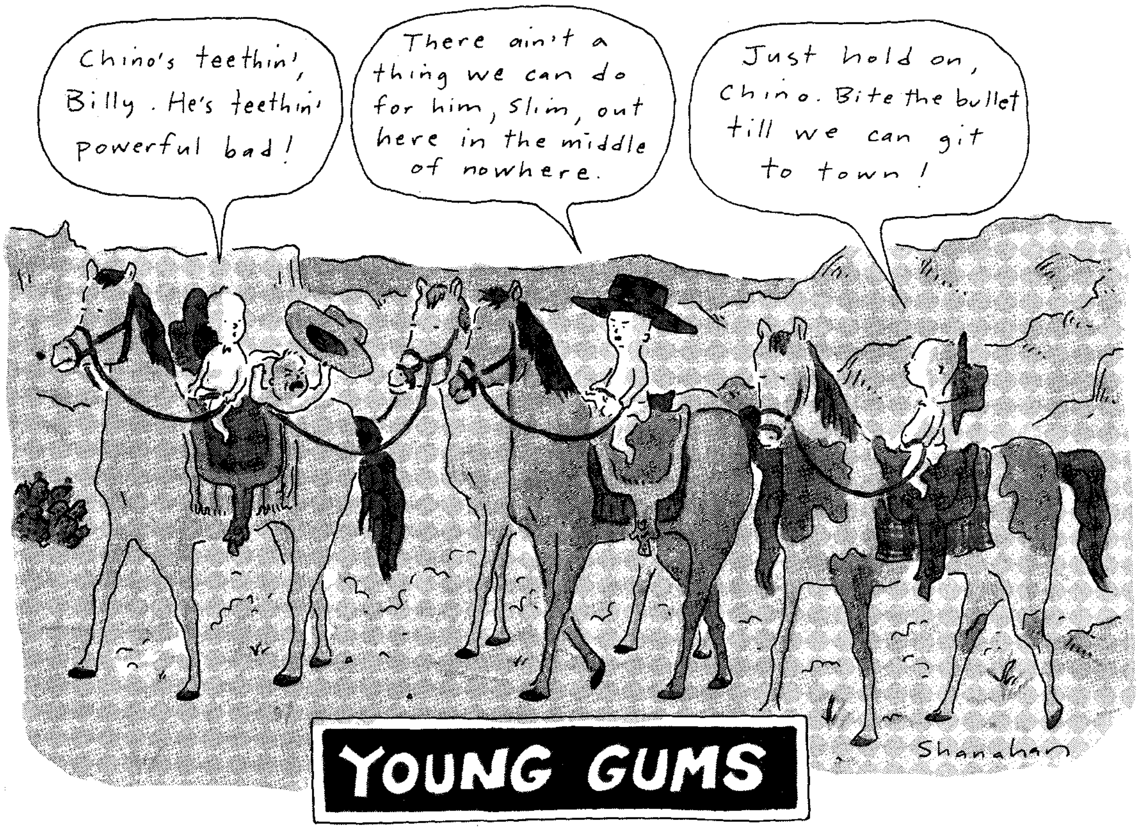
Through the open door we glimpsed Mickey Mouse, outfitted in his blue hat and ruby-red robe from the “Sorcerer’s Apprentice” sequence of “Fantasia.” Didn’t his face seem to glow? Wasn’t he getting larger by the second? Weren’t his arms extending before him, fingers spread wide? To cast a spell? Play a chord? Now Mr. Schoenbach’s voice broke in. “When ‘Fantasia’ opened in New York, I went to the Broadway Theatre to see it. I came away very impressed. So I went to Stokowski and said that I had changed my mind on seeing the movie. I liked it. ‘Better late than never,’ Stoki said.”

Radical

“THIS fills out their hand,” the woman from the electronics magazine was explaining to the other journalists who had come on a recent Monday evening to sit in the Skylobby of the Marriott Marquis Hotel, on Broadway, and watch the Aiwa company turn on the brightest sign there has ever been in Times Square. “Go outside after this is over tonight and stand on Forty-second Street and look north: Canon, Panasonic, and Sony behind where Coke used to be; Fuji; even the beer sign is for Kirin beer. All that’s left for us is the big Camel sign, where Toshiba used to be, and that doesn’t do anything anymore. I don’t think they get it, really. It’s just names, big names, for them. Or a clock—this one’s got a digital clock over the big letters that spell out ‘AIWA.’ Where are the smoke rings, the flying horses, the steaming coffee cups? Where are the giant faces, the big mouths, the lipstick smiles? Where’s the romance? Just the name of a company that nobody pronounces right, and a clock to tell the time by.” While she spoke, the lights of all the other neon signs in Times Square were visible as glimmers of green and violet light falling across her face.

“The Japanese still believe in Times Square—they believe in its spirit, that it’s good for them,” another of the writers said. “They believe in all that American stuff.” Leaning forward confidentially, he went on, “We went to the Thomson-RCA press conference last week, and you know what they were doing to introduce their fall line? They were *bringing in a new dog*—to go with the old RCA dog. You know—with the phonograph, and all? Now they’ve got two dogs—the old dog, Nipper, and a little dog. Two dogs, and they didn’t even have a name for the little one. What does that tell you? Every neon sign in Times Square is Japanese, and RCA can’t even think of a name for the little dog.”

A young man in a jumpsuit made of loud camouflage cloth came into the room. He looked warily at the tableful of journalists and then, jiggling from foot to foot, made his way to the buffet. He was medium-sized, he was thick across the shoulders, and he went on jiggling from foot to foot as he loaded up a plate with sushi. A striking-looking blonde came along just behind him. She didn’t


Chino's teethin', Billy. He's teethin' powerful bad!
There ain't a thing we can do for him, Slim, out here in the middle of nowhere.
Just hold on, Chino. Bite the bullet till we can git to town!
YOUNG GUMS
Shanahan

take any food from the buffet. Without looking up from his plate, the young man took her hand; she ran the fingers of her other hand lovingly through a two-foot-high bristle of dyed, pomaded hair that ran in a narrow cockscomb from the middle of his forehead to his nape.

"There's their guy, the skier," the woman from the electronics magazine said. "He's the new Aiwa guy. Now, that's a smart move. You never heard of him, I never heard of him, but he's some kind of cult figure. Thirteen-year-olds—their market—worship him. He makes some kind of funny cult movies—ski-gore movies, or something. Trust the Japanese."

A couple of journalists wearily dislodged themselves from the table and—threading their way through little knots of American Aiwa executives anxiously making time with Japanese Aiwa executives who had come all the way from Tokyo to see the sign light up—went over to the young man in the jumpsuit.

"Glenn Plake," he said instantly, as a greeting, "I'm an extreme skier, and I star in extreme-skiing movies. Have you heard of them? The Greg Stump movies? 'Maltese Flamingo,' or 'Blizzard of Aahh's,' or the upcoming 'License to Thrill'?" The reporters hadn't. "They're thrillers with extreme-skiing backgrounds," Glenn explained, looking a little disappointed. "It's a cult-type thing, I guess. They're true-life stories about extreme skiers, but there's no acting per se. I mean, there's acting, but we're all our true-life-type thing. This year's movie even has a story line. The Japanese buy up the TV networks, and our extreme-skiing squad has to win them back." He blushed, and added, "I guess I shouldn't say that. I made the movie before I signed the contract with Aiwa."

A reporter asked if it would be O.K. to call them ski-gore movies.

"Ski-*action* movies, maybe," Glenn said. The girl touched him on the mohawk, and then pulled her finger away quickly, as though his hair were electric. "Oh, excuse me," Glenn said, "This is my friend the actress Kimberly Manuel." Kimberly Manuel shook hands with all the reporters.

Then the president of Aiwa America got up and made a few remarks. He said that it was a proud day for Aiwa to see its logo on the brightest sign on Broadway. He said that in a few minutes everyone would be able to watch the sign light up on a live video feed, after Mr. Unoki, the president of the Aiwa company, threw the switch. Then he joked about Glenn Plake's hair. "We're so proud to have the No. 1-rated extreme skier as our No. 1 spokesperson," he said. "We like his conservative, buttoned-down look."

Glenn Plake laughed happily. "I *love* going to these things," he said to Kimberly Manuel, squeezing her hand.

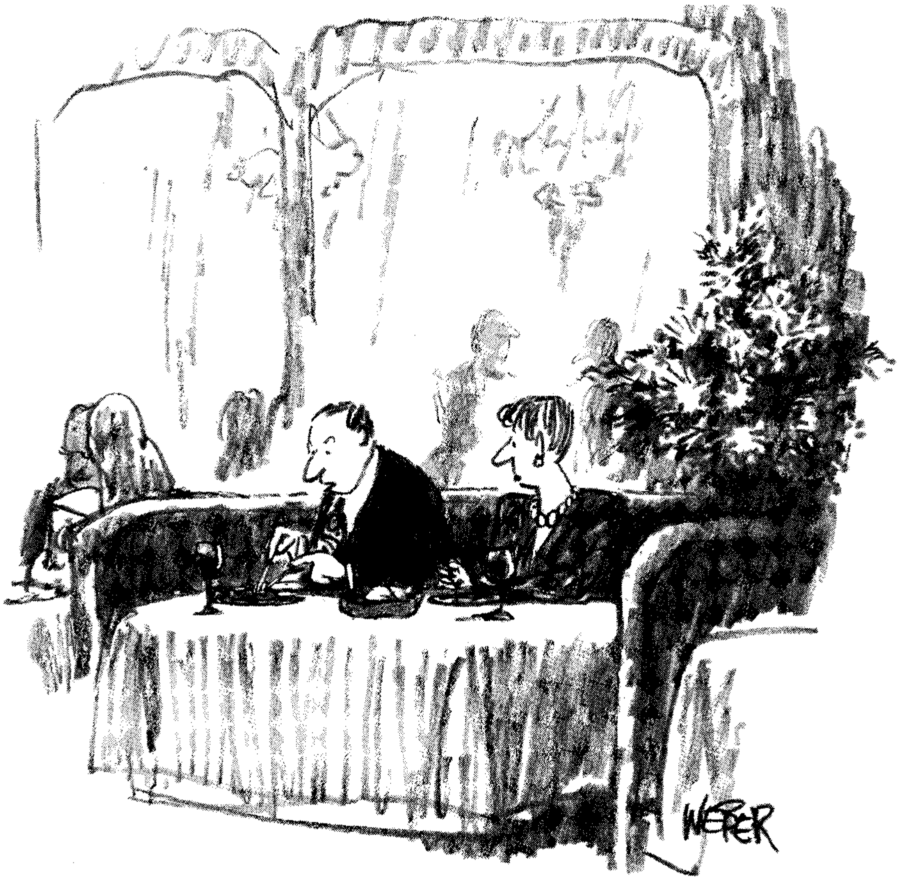
Then Mr. Unoki made a speech. He said that he felt humbled by the challenges that lay ahead for his company. He said that when his American team first showed him the designs for this great and beautiful sign he had been concerned about the slogan that would be displayed to all America in such large and radiant lettering: "AIWA—DIGITAL AUDIO & VIDEO." He felt ashamed, because he realized that his company's products were not yet fully digitized. However, he said, he would accept the slogan as a challenge to the company, and as a symbol of its commitment to bringing new technology to the emerging world market. Then he thanked Glenn Plake for lending his "trademark surprising hair style" to the task of introducing Aiwa's products to American youth. A man from an American P.R. firm and the American president of Aiwa led Mr. Unoki to a big prop: a three-foot-tall Lucite model of an ordinary wall switch.

Mr. Unoki approached the giant light switch, reached out for it, and then stopped. He looked unhappy. He turned, and asked, "Switch goes up or down?"

The American executives looked puzzled.

"Up or down, please," Mr. Unoki prompted. "To light sign. Switch goes up, or switch goes down?"

The American executives conferred. Up, they decided. Mr. Unoki bowed from the shoulders, turned back to the light switch, and pushed it up. After a moment, all the television monitors in the room came alive with a picture of the new Aiwa sign, bright and immense, out in the clear fall night.



"I asked for rare, but it's well done. I think it's time to get out of New York."

• •

PUTTERMESSER PAIRED

I. AN AGE OF DIVORCE

AT the unsatisfying age of fifty-plus, Ruth Puttermesser, a lawyer, a rationalist, and an ex-public official, took a year off to live on her savings and think through her fate. In the second week of her freedom—no slavery of paperwork, no office to go to (she had bled out a wide tract of her life in the corridors of the Municipal Building)—it came to her that what she ought to do was marry. This was not a new idea: it had been her mother's refrain as far back as three decades ago or more, ever since Puttermesser's first year in law school.

> Ruth, Ruth [her mother wrote from Miami], there's nothing wrong with having a husband along with brains, it's not a contradiction. For God's sake pull your head out of the clouds! If you don't get married *where will you be, what will happen?* Alone is a stone as they say and believe me Ruthie Daddy agrees with me on this issue not only double but triple, we didn't come down here to live in the heat with Daddy's bursitis only in order to break his heart from you and your brains.

This innocently anti-feminist letter was now brown at the edges, brittle; in the fresh tedium of her leisure Puttermesser was sorting out the boxes stored under her bed. She was throwing things out. Her mother was dead. Her father was dead. There would be no more reports of the Florida weather, and no grandchildren to inherit these interesting out-of-date postage stamps and wrinkled complaints. Puttermesser was an elderly orphan. For the first time it struck her that her mother was right: it was possible for brains to break the heart.

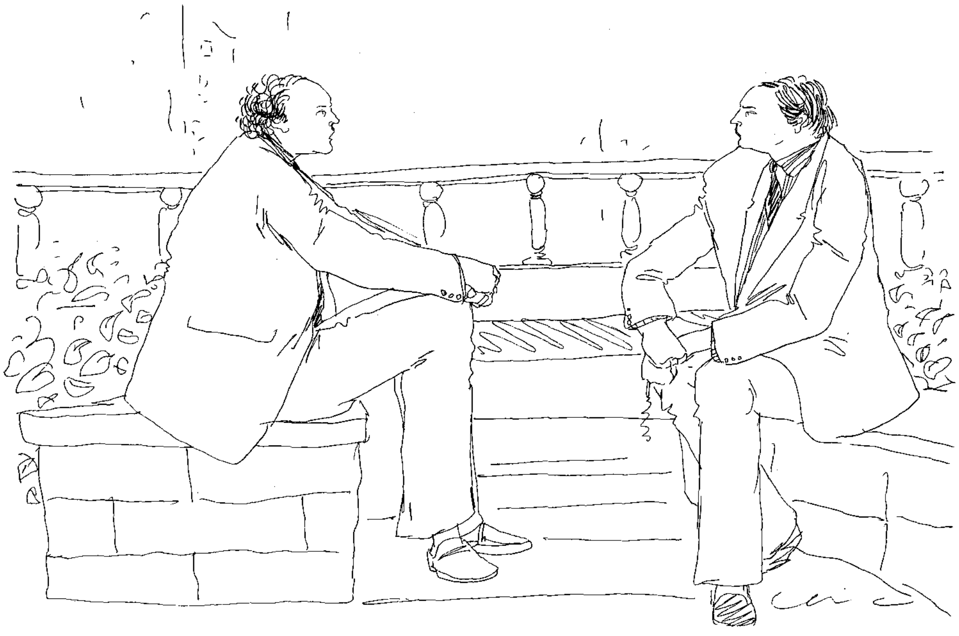
She bought a copy of the *New York Review of Books* and looked through the personals. Brains, brains everywhere.

> Fit, handsome, ambitious writer/editor, militant nonsmoker, witty, imaginative, irreverent, seeks lasting relationship with nonsmoking female. Must be brilliant, unpretentious, passionate, creative. Prefer Ph.D. in Milton, Shakespeare, or Beowulf.

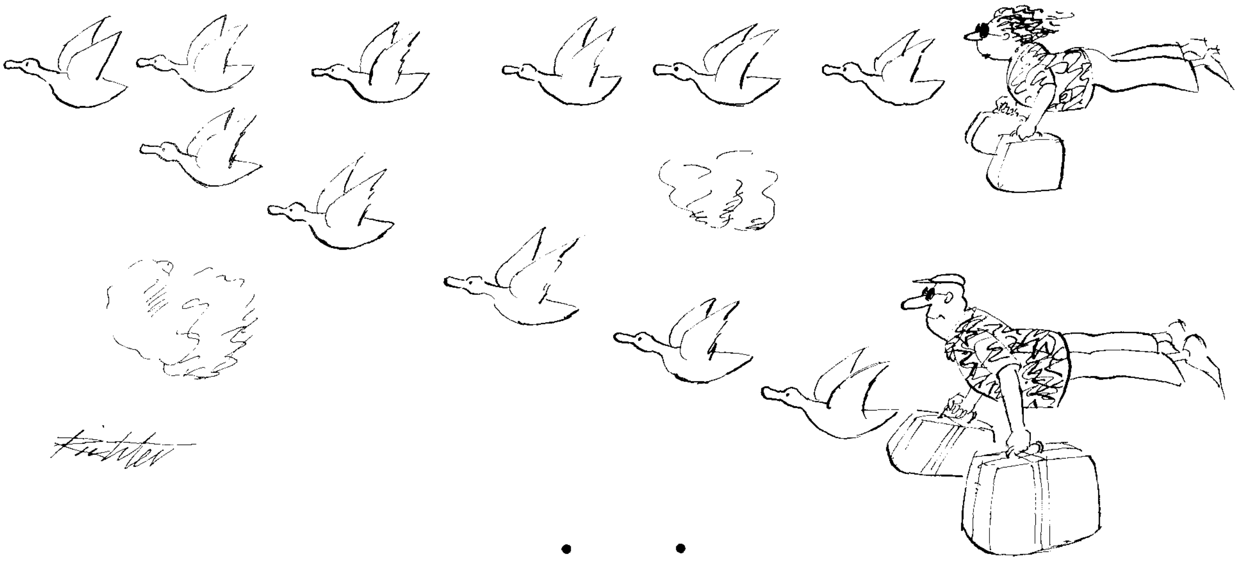
> University professor, anthropologist, 50, gentle, intellectual, youthful, author of three volumes on Aleutian Islanders, cherishes the examined life, welcomes marriage or long-term attachment to loyal, accomplished professional woman; well-analyzed (Jung only, no Freud or Reich, please). Sense of humor and love of outdoors a must.

Among dozens of these condensed portraits Puttermesser could not recognize herself. She was hostile to the outdoors; the country air—the peril of so many uneasy encounters with unidentifiable rodents, loud birds, monstrous insects, mud after fearsome Sag Harbor storms—left her moody and squeamish. She was no good at getting the points of jokes. The persecution of smokers she regarded as a civil-liberties issue. As for the examined life—enough! She was sick of examining her own and hardly needed to hear an Eskimo expert examine his. It was all fiction anyhow—those columns and columns of ads. "Vibrant, appealing, attractive, likable"—that meant divorced. Leftovers and mistakes. "Unconventional, earthy, nurturing, fascinated by Zen, Sufism, music of the spheres"—a crackpot still in sandals. "Successful achiever longing for strong woman"—watch out, probably a porn nut. Every self-indulgent type in the book turned up in these ads. Literature was no better. The great novels, rife with weirdos and misalliance—Isabel Archer entangled with the sinister Gilbert Osmond, Gwendolen Harleth's troubles with Grandcourt. Anna Karenina. Worst of all, poor Dorothea Brooke and the deadly Mr. Casaubon. All these bad characters—the men in the case absolutely, and many of the women—were brainy. Think of Shaw, a logician, refusing to allow Professor Higgins to wed Eliza, in open dread of foreordained rotten consequences. And Jane Austen: with one hand she marries Elizabeth to Darcy, clever with clever, and with the other she goes and saddles Mr. Bennet with a silly wife. People get stuck. Brains are no guarantee. Hope is slim.

The truth was this: Puttermesser had entered a new zone of being. From the Women Attorneys Association she received a questionnaire: "Aging and the Female Counsellor." Aging! Puttermesser! How could this be, when she had yet to satisfy Miss Charlotte Kuntz, her piano teacher? At Puttermesser's last lesson, forty-five years ago, Miss Kuntz had warned her sharply that such-and-such a sonatina needed work. It was just before summer vacation. Puttermesser promised to toil over the Tempo di Minuetto section all during July and August (the Andante was easier), but she put it off and put it off. Instead, she wandered in a trance in and out of the children's room of the public library; the rule was you could take out only two books at a time. Frequently Puttermesser appeared at the library twice in one day, to return two and to borrow two more. She read far into the rosy shadows of the summer twilight. The lower half of the sky was daubed with a streak of blood. "A beautiful day tomorrow," Putter-



"Well, if I can't be either a borrower or a lender, what do I do with myself?"



messer's mild father said. "That's what a red sunset means."

But Puttermesser's mother scolded: "In the dark! Again reading in the dark! You'll burn out your eyes! And didn't you *swear* to Miss Kuntz you'll practice every day during vacation? You're not ashamed, she'll come back and you didn't learn it yet? Nose in the book without a light!"

In late August a letter arrived. Miss Kuntz was not coming back. She was moving upstate with her elderly father. "As I have often mentioned, Ruth," she wrote, "you are intelligent, but require more diligence. Always remember: Every Great Brain Delves Furiously!"

By now, Puttermesser had put off practicing for so long that her hair was showing signs of whitening. If alive, Miss Kuntz would be a hundred and four. Puttermesser had still not perfected the Tempo di Minuetto section, so how was it possible to consider a questionnaire on aging?

Do you encounter discrimination on the part of judges? Employers? Clients? Court personnel?
Has your mental acuity or judgment noticeably slackened? If yes, how does this manifest itself?
Have your earlier positions (political, moral, societal) eroded? Are you, in your opinion, capable of new ideas? Flexibility? An open mind?
Have your earnings diminished? Increased? Are you treated with less respect? More? If more, how does your mature appearance contribute to this?
Has the feminist movement eased your professional situation? Are you harried less? More? No difference? How many times per week do you encounter sexist or ageist remarks?
Do you dye your hair? Use henna? Surrender to Mother Nature? If the latter, does this appear to augment or lessen your dignity among male colleagues? Female colleagues? The public?

Miss Kuntz was no doubt under the ground in Pleasantville, New York, together with her father. In Puttermesser's cramped apartment in the East Seventies—a neighborhood of ophthalmologists and dermatologists—there was no room for a piano; the space near her bed could barely accommodate a modest desk. At night she could hear the high-school math teacher on the other side of the wall plunge her red pencils into an electric sharpener. Sometimes the math teacher did exercises on a plastic mat—unfolding, it whacked against the baseboard. A divorcée in her middle thirties, who counted out loud with each leg stretch. She was working on her figure in the hope of attracting a lover. An announcement addressed to the math teacher had been thrust into Puttermesser's mailbox.

SINGLES EVENT!
ATTENTION! EDUCATED UNUSUAL SINGLES
TEACHERS' MIXER EVERY FRIDAY NIGHT
8:30 P.M.
MEET YOUR PEERS WITHOUT SNEERS OR TEARS
BRONX SCIENCE, HUNTER HIGH, STUYVESANT,
OTHER TOP SCHOOLS WELL REPRESENTED
$3 DONATION TO COVER PUNCH AND CHEESE
NOTE TO MALE TEACHERS: MORE MEN WANTED!
BRING YOUR (PROFESSIONAL) FRIENDS
CALL GINNY (718) 555-3000 FOR DETAILS

Puttermesser contemplated calling Ginny—she, too, was an educated unusual single. Instead, she slid the sheet under the math teacher's door. The building, with its dedication to anonymity (each mysterious soul invisible in its own cubicle), was subject to jitters and multiple confusions. Mixups, mishaps, misdeliveries, misnamings. To the doorman she was Miss Perlmutter. If you asked the super to send the plumber you would get the exterminator. Without warning, the pipes dried up for the day; you could try to run the faucet and nothing would come out. Or the lights would fail; the refrigerator fluttered its grand lung and ceased. All the refrigerators up and down the whole row of apartments on a single corridor expired together, in one extended shudder. You could feel it under your soles, right through the carpeting. The building was a nervous organism; its familiar soughings ricocheted from cranny to cranny. Puttermesser could tell which floor the elevator was stopping on by the pitch of its motor. She knew by the thump in the hall, and by the slap of sneakers heading back to the elevator, and by the rattle of all her locks, the moment when the new telephone book landed on her doormat.

Thump, slap, rattle. Something had landed there now; the sneakers were in flight. The chain lock was still swinging and tinkling. Puttermesser laboriously fiddled with it, and then with the other two locks. Each required one turn followed by a quarter turn. She worked as fast as she could. What if there were a fire? Robbery and rape or get burned alive: the New York predicament. All her neighbors had just as many locks; the math teacher had installed a steel

ELEGY FOR THE OLD MEXICAN WOMAN AND HER DEAD CHILD

Am I mistaken—
or is the air thinner here?

Could a swallow, even *at this altitude*,
find purchase for its wing?

In the bathroom mirror I already glimpse
the eccentric old man

slowly working himself loose
from my face:

athletic, tanned, wrinkled,
his blue eyes steadily growing colder,

the last of the men I will be—
not quite finished yet but already sketched in.

I try to recall the child who once occupied
the same spot in the mirror:

blond, round-cheeked, contented,
resting on his chubby little elbows.

How can we live, so many men,
in the same body?

An old woman in Mexico, says the newspaper,
entered a hospital with stomach trouble.

An examination revealed that for more than sixty years
the eighty-six-year-old woman had carried

a dried-up fetus weighing nine hundred grams.
It had followed her through life.

You might say she was at once mother
and grave for this same child.

The graves: their hollows, urns, vaults,
marble crypts, or simple holes in the earth

we've persisted with for thousands of years,
of course they're some kind of *mothers;*

helplessly we try to return the dead
to their point of departure.

The Mexican woman was, in a way,
the *ideal grave*. And her child's,

a model life? Mockingbird, what do you want?
You have so many voices, and I don't know

which one of them to take seriously.
The scornful sometimes, the complaining sometimes—

then there's a kind of clucking
on certain days in early spring,

when dampness still clings to the moss on the oaks,
as if you didn't quite want to speak out.

Mockingbird in the green oak tree!
What's the secret you sit there trying to swallow?

I, too, am an old Mexican woman.
I, too, carry a dead child,

but my child is a strange one: it can speak—
actually it speaks incessantly,

unclearly, prattling like all children
who haven't learned to speak. It isn't easy

to know what it wants, but it does want something.
I'm not unyielding, quite the opposite:

I feel I'm in loco parentis,
trying hard to understand what this child

wants from its life, which is its death.
But it isn't easy. It's so unlike me.

And it knows nothing of this world.

—LARS GUSTAFSSON

(*Translated, from the Swedish, by Yvonne L. Sandstroem.*)

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pole that dropped into a hole in the floor.

The locks were undone. Puttermesser stuck her head out in time to see the flash of a yellow shirt at the end of the corridor. At her feet a chimney of huge, flat cardboard boxes rose up. There was a smell of noisome cheese.

"Hey!" Puttermesser yelled. "Get back here! I didn't order this stuff."

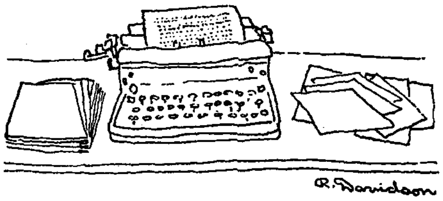
"6-C, right?" the yellow shirt yelled back. "Pizza!"

"3-C. You want the sixth floor. I didn't order any pizza," Puttermesser yelled.

"You Morgenbluth?"

"You've got the wrong apartment."

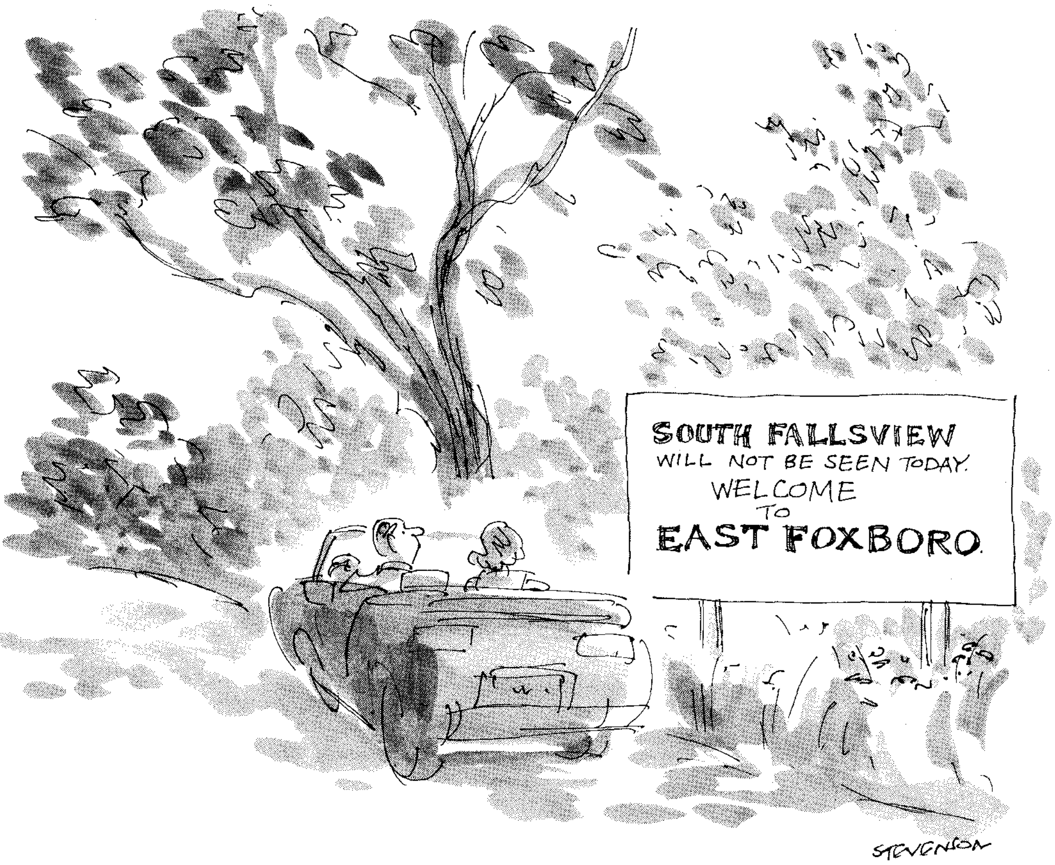
"Listen," the yellow shirt called. "Bike's in the street. Boss's bike. They take my bike, I'm finished. Half-dozen veggie pizzas for Morgenbluth, O.K.?"



"I don't know any Morgenbluth!"

Like a piece of stage machinery, the elevator hummed the yellow shirt out of sight.

Fecal smell of the stable—that cheese; some unfathomable sauce. Puttermesser kept her distance from ethnic foods. She had never tasted souvlaki; she had never tasted sushi. With the



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exception of chocolate fudge and Tootsie Rolls (her molars were ruined and crowned), gastronomy did not draw her. What she was concentrating on was marriage: the marriage of true minds. Reciprocal transcendence—she was not thinking of sinew, synapse, hormone-fired spasm. Those couples who saunter by with arms like serpents wrapped around each other, stopping in the middle of the sidewalk to plug mouth on mouth: biological robots, twitches powered by pitiless instinct. Puttermesser, despite everything, was not beyond idealism; she believed (admittedly the proposition wouldn't stand up under rigorous questioning) she had a soul. She dreamed—why not dream?—of a wedding of like souls.

Only the day before yesterday Puttermesser had taken out of the Society Library on East Seventy-ninth Street—an amiable walk from her apartment—a biography of George Eliot. A woman with a soul, born Mary Anne Evans, who had named herself George in sympathy with her sympathetic mate. George Eliot and George Lewes, penmen both, sat side by side every evening reading aloud to each other. They read science, philosophy, history, poetry. Once, they travelled up to Oxford to see a brain dissected. Another time, they invited Charles Dickens to lunch; he enthralled them with an eerie anecdote about Lincoln's death. They undertook feverishly cultural journeys to Spain and Italy and Germany, sightseeing with earnest thoroughness, visiting cathedrals and museums, going diligently night after night to the theatre and opera. On steamers, for relaxation, they read Walter Scott. They were strenuous naturalists, pursuing riverbanks and hillsides for shells and fungi. Their house was called the Priory; nothing not high-minded or morally or artistically serious ever happened there. The people who came on Sunday afternoons—George Eliot presided over a "salon"—were uniformly distinguished, the cream of English intellectual life: they were learned in Chaldaic, Aramaic, Amharic, Phoenician, or Sanskrit; or else they were orators, or else had invented the clinical thermometer; or were aristocrats, or Americans. The young Henry James made a pilgrimage to George Eliot's footstool, and so did Virginia Woolf's father. George Lewes was always present—small, thin, blond, quick—an impresario steering an awed room around the long-nosed sibyl in her chair. She depended on him; he protected her from slights, hurts, cruelty, shame, and from the critical doubts of John Blackwood, her publisher, who took her at first for a clergyman. It was a marriage of brain with brain, weightiness with weightiness. Dignity with dignity. And of course there was no marriage at all—not legally or officially. Lewes's wife, Agnes, was an adulteress who went on giving birth to another man's children; but it was an age of no divorce. George Lewes and George Eliot, husband and wife, a marriage of true minds admitting no impediment, were, perforce, a scandal.

All this Puttermesser knew inside out: it was her third or fourth, or perhaps fifth or sixth, George Eliot biography. She had, moreover, arrived at that season of life—its "autumn," in the language of one of these respectful old volumes—when rereading gratifies more than discovery, and there were certain familiar passages that she had assimilated word for word. "And yet brilliance conquered impropriety" gave her a shiver whenever she came on it; and also "Consider how a homely female intellectual, no longer young, falls into a happy fate." O happy fate! Somewhere on the East Side of New York, from, say, Fifty-third to Eighty-ninth, or possibly on West End Avenue between Sixty-sixth and Ninety-eighth, a latter-day George Lewes lurked: Puttermesser's own, sans scandal. It was now, after all, an age of divorce.

The shopping cart was squeezed between the refrigerator and the sink, folded up to fit into the little alley where the roaches frolicked. Wrestling it out, Puttermesser recalled her mother's phrase for a divorced man: "used goods." Yet what else was there for her in the world but used goods? Puttermesser was used goods herself, in her mother's manner of speaking: she had once had a lover. But lovers are transients: they have a way of moving on—they are subject to panicked reconsiderations, sudden depressions, cold feet. Lovers are notorious for cowardice, for returning to their wives.

Puttermesser wedged the cart against the doorjamb and bent to heave each big, flat box into it. When all the pizzas were piled up inside the wire frame, she double-locked her top lock and triple-locked her bottom lock and trundled the cart down the corridor to the elevator. It was like pushing a wheelbarrow filled with slag. The elevator smelled partly of urine and partly of pine-scented disinfectant; with the cart in it there was barely enough room to stand. She poked the button marked "6," but instead of grinding her upward, the thing headed for the lobby, now and then scraping against the shaft.

Two very tall young women were waiting down there. One of them was carrying a bottle of wine without a wrapper.

"You getting out?"

"I was on my way up," Puttermesser said. "You brought me down."

"Well, we can't all fit," said the tall young woman with the wine.

"Just *try*," said the other tall young woman. "If you could just move your laundry—"

The tall young woman with the wine looked into the cart. "That isn't laundry. Smells like throw-up."

Puttermesser's spine pressed against the back wall of the elevator. The buttons were beyond her reach. A large black plastic triangle—an earring— swung into her face; the bottle of wine drove into her side.

"What floor?"

"Six," Puttermesser said.

"How about that. Is this stuff for Harvey's party? You going where we're going, Harvey's party?"

"No," Puttermesser said.

"Harvey Morgenbluth? On the sixth floor?"

"That's where I'm going," Puttermesser said.

The door to 6-C was propped open; all its chains were dangling free. A row of spidery plants in tiger-striped pots lined the foyer—a tropical motif. It was the sort of party, Puttermesser saw, where children run through shrieking and no one complains. Ducks in police uniforms were shooting at evil-visaged porcupines in burglars' caps on a big color television in a corner of the living room, next to a white piano, but the children were paying no attention at all. A mob of them were chasing three little boys in overalls, two of whom seemed, as they sped by, to be identical twins. They raced through the living room and out into what Puttermesser knew had to be the kitchen (6-C's layout was the same as 3-C's) and back again. "No we don't, no we don't," all three were yowling. The two very tall young women from the elevator instantly made a place for themselves on the beige tweed carpet in front of the sofa, kneeling at the coffee table and pouring wine into paper cups, instantly hilarious; it was as if they had been dawdling there for hours. The sofa itself held a tangle of five or six human forms, each with its legs in one extraordinary position or another, and each devoted to a paper cup. Behind the children's screeches, a steady sea-noise burbled: the sound of a party that has been long under way, and has already secretly been defined, by the earliest arrivals, as a success or a failure.

This one was a failure; all ruined parties are alike. They pump themselves up, they are too boisterous, too frenetic, they pretend raucous pleasure. And this is true even of parties with cousins and young aunts; of families. The Morgenbluth apartment looked to be all family—husbands, wives, untamed offspring. Sisters-in-law, like the pair from the elevator. A birthday—one of the little boys', probably—but there was too much wine, and no balloons; besides, the children were being ignored. Puttermesser wheeled the cart straight toward the white piano and began lifting the boxes out onto the top of it. Cracker crumbs were scattered over the keys; a cigarette, with its snout still burning, lay directly on middle C. The boxes climbed upward in precarious steps.

"Leaning tower of pizza," someone quipped, and, from the tight little tone she caught in the voice, Puttermesser was certain that she was mistaken after all, that the noise all around was anything but domestic, that except for the children no one here belonged to anybody: no husbands, wives, cousins, aunts. It was the usual collection of the unattached. Roomful of the divorced on a Sunday afternoon in mild middle November. A "singles event": the math teacher, puffing on her mat three floors below, strained her torso in ignorance of the paradise of opportunity just overhead.

"It's about time we got some real food in here. You can't feed kids indefinitely on peanuts. Pretzels, maybe. Takes a grownup woman to remember nutrition. Any of these little sons of bitches yours?"

"I'd have to be their grandmother," Puttermesser said. It was the kind of remark she despised, and this stranger—a bearded man in his fifties, with a squashed nose and oversized, naïve eyes, gray and on guard, more suitable to a kitten—had forced her to it.

He was pecking at the peanuts in his palm. "Well, you don't look it—they say it's all in the chin line. Twins are mine, but only on alternate weekends. With me it's al-

STATESMAN
PATRIOT
APPREHENDED

ways a double felony. Not to mention a couple of breakups. Marital. The way you spell that is m-a-r-t-i-a-l." He put out his hand, greasy from the peanuts. "Freddy Kaplow. How long've you known Harvey?"

The New York patter. Mechanical spew of the middle-aged flirt; he was practiced enough. And too stale for such young sons. Already finished with the second wife, the mother of the twins. No doubt a grown daughter from the first marriage. The daughter and the second wife were, as usual, nearly the same age.

"Tell Mr. Morgenbluth his pizza was delivered to the wrong apartment," Puttermesser said. "Tell him 3-C corrected the error."

"3-C corrected the error. No kidding, that's how come you got here? Cute, I like that. Boy-meets-girl cute."

Puttermesser took hold of her cart and began to wheel it away.

"There goes Mother Courage," Freddy Kaplow called after her. "Hey! No guts!"

The two young women from the elevator, still curled on the carpet, were being even more hilarious than before; on the sofa the row of tangled legs had become attentive. Three pairs of trousers (two corduroy, one blue denim), two of panty hose. One of the men on the sofa—not the one in jeans—wore his hair in a ponytail, but was mainly bald in front.

Puttermesser tugged cautiously on the cart handle. "Excuse me. If you wouldn't mind, if I could just slide through here—"

"Hello there, pizza person, when do we eat?"

The balding man with the ponytail said, "I saw a bag lady the other day with one of those. She had it filled up to the top with piles of old shoes. All mixed up, no pairs."

"What'd she think she was going to do with them?"

"God only knows. Sell 'em."

"Eat 'em."

"Boil 'em in the bowels of Grand Central Station, *then* eat 'em."

"That's not funny," said a woman on the sofa. "I *work* with the homeless."

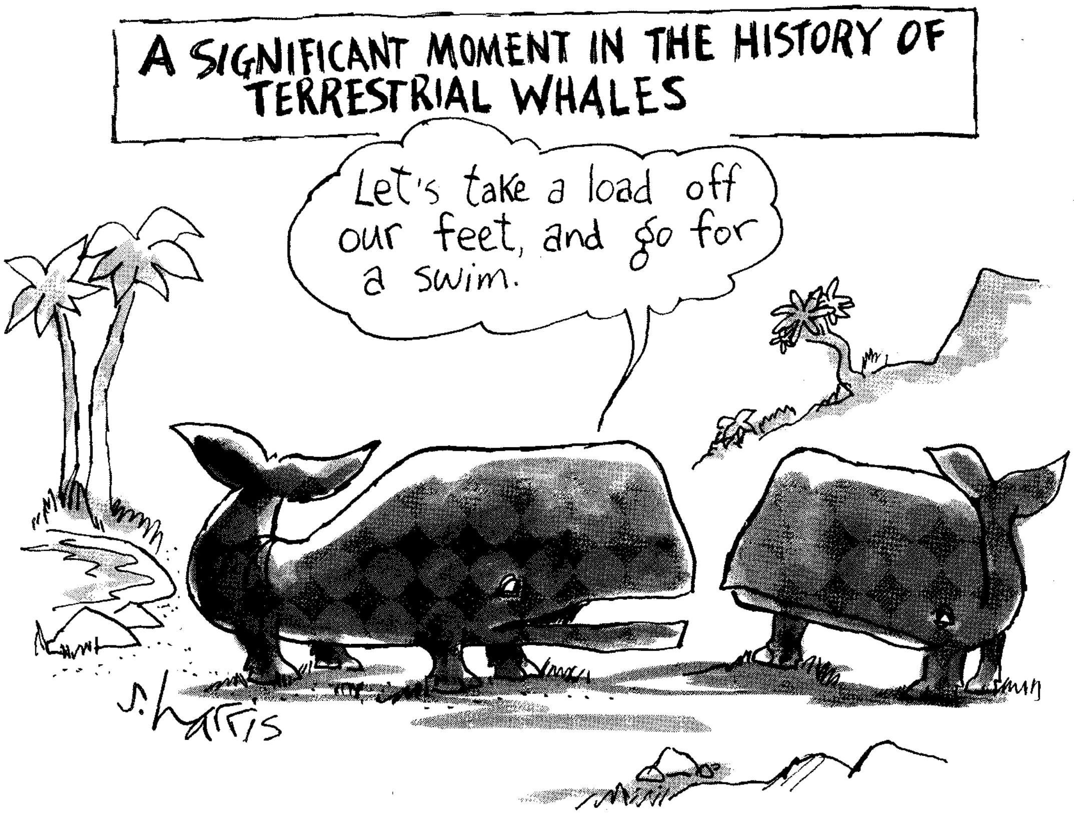
Puttermesser stopped. Pity for the ravaged municipality—reverberations from her days in officialdom—could still beat in her.

"In our program—it's a volunteer thing—what we try to do is get them to keep diaries. We read poetry, we do E. E. Cummings. They feel it when you're spiritually *with* them."

Another version of the New York patter. The wisecrack version and the earnest version, and all of it ego and self-regard. All of it conceit. Where was virtue, where was knowledge? Puttermesser was conscious of inward heavings and longings. She thought of mutuality, of meaning. So many indolent strutters, so much babble battering at the ceiling. That white piano with the crumbs. In no more than a quarter of an hour the windows behind the piano had begun to darken to blue dusk. Harvey Morgenbluth's beige tweed carpet, his paper cups, the hysteria of those hungry half-orphaned children running loose. Oh, for a time machine! London in the grave twilight of a hundred years ago, Sunday evenings at the Priory. Cornices, massive draperies in heavy folds, ponderous tables and cupboards with carved gryphons' claws or lions' feet, old enamelled landscapes hanging on tasselled cords from high roseate ceilings. A keyboard left open for the sublime and resolute hands. And in a great stuffed armchair in a shadowed corner, away from the lamp, the noble sibyl, receiving. Lives of courtliness, distinction; clarified lives, without tumble or blur. In George Eliot's parlor, a manner, or an idea, was purely itself. Ah, to leave careless New York behind, to be restored to glad, golden Victoria, when the electric light was new and poetry unashamed!

In the foyer several of the tiger-striped pots had been overturned into puddles of wine; Puttermesser drew her cart through a patch of country mud. The spidery plants sprawled. A child's shoe lay flattened under one of the pots. A child's sock had become a glove for the doorknob.

And there, at the littered entrance of 6-C, stood a Victorian gentleman. He was not very tall; his cheeks and wrists looked thin. He was distractingly young, with a blond mustache, and he was actually wearing a hat—a formal hat, not exactly a fedora, but something


A SIGNIFICANT MOMENT IN THE HISTORY OF TERRESTRIAL WHALES
Let's take a load off our feet, and go for a swim.
J. Harris

more stately than a mere cap. He had on a capelike raincoat—partially unfurled at each shoulder, cola brown, and grandly punctuated by big, varnished metal buttons as shockingly bright as cymbals. Sherlock Holmes? Oscar Wilde? A dandy, in any case, self-consciously on display. One arm was held high, the other low, and in between rode a large, flat rectangle wrapped in pale-yellow paper and tied with a white string.

Puttermesser humbly backed her cart into mud to let the dandy pass. He slipped by without taking any notice of her. She saw how she was invisible to him, of less moment than the tiger-striped pots displaced in his path. *She* had given way; the pots demanded his circumspection, and obliged him to go around them. It was worse than the Women Attorneys could imagine: the humiliating equation of a counsellor of mature appearance with the walls and ceiling of 6-C's desolated vestibule. A doorknob is more engaging than a woman of fifty-plus. The man's face hurt Puttermesser; its youth hurt her. For an instant his head was perilously near hers—picking through the uprooted greenery, he tilted so close that she caught sight of the separate tender hairs of his mustache. His eyes were small and serious. Puttermesser thought with a pang how such a head, with such a dignified hat, and such snubbing colorless irises, and such an unfamiliar gravity of intent, would be out of place in Harvey Morgenbluth's living room, among the New York flirts. And that big flat package: a map? A map of the city, the world? An astronomical map. Andromeda. Ursa Major and Minor. Or a graph. A business graph. He was only a salesman, so never mind. Anyhow, it was an illicit hurt: youth is for youth. An aesthetic error, a thin-skinned moral grotesquerie, to yearn after such a head, hat, cape; that nose, that mouth, those intimate hairs.

In her own apartment Puttermesser collapsed the cart and shoved it back into the alleyway between the refrigerator and the sink. There had been, she observed, a hatching: a crowd of baby roaches milled under the ray of her flashlight, then fled with purposeful intelligence. In God's littlest, the urge toward being and enduring; a soulless mite wills its continuity with all the force and fury of our own mammoth human longing. O life, O philosophy!

All the same, Puttermesser sprayed.

In the morning she heard the brush of something in flight under her door:

Dear 3-C:

Just a note of thanx for yesterday's delivery—Freddy Kaplow (your pal and mine) gave me the dope on this. Sorry for the trouble and sorry I missed you! I'd love to return the favor, so if you ever need a passport photo in a hurry (no charge) or anything else in that line call on me. (I'm in the photography business, by the way.) I specialize in commercial reducing and enlarging but also in children's portraits. If you're interested in having a portrait done of the kids I can offer you a 25% studio discount in honor of your Good Deed!

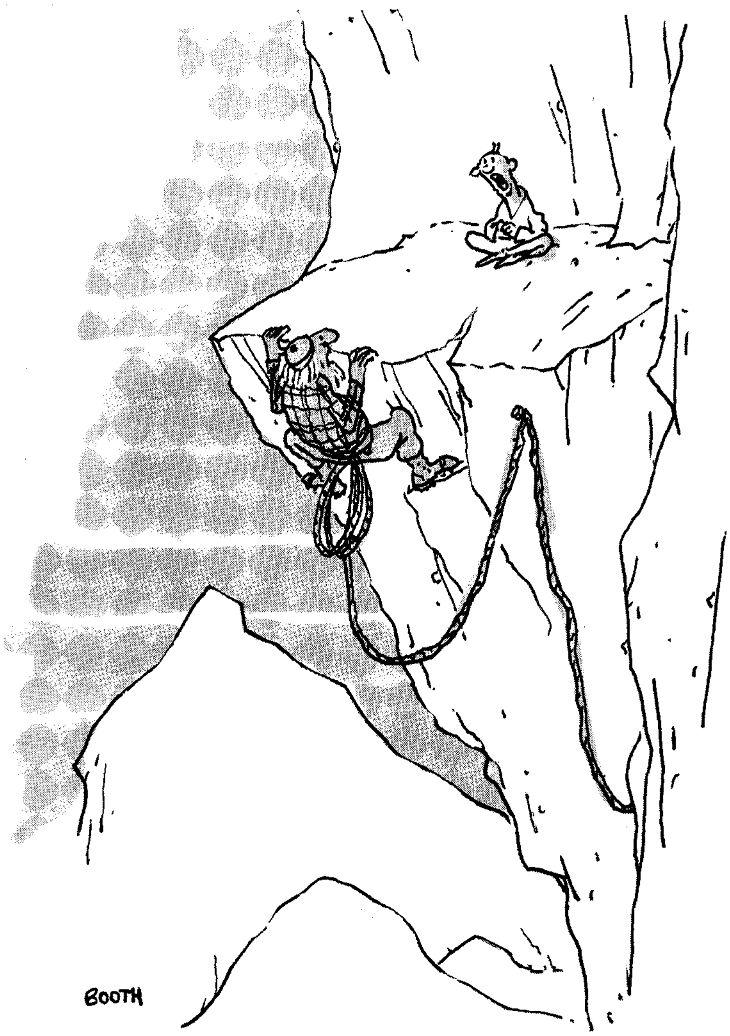
Yours hastily (scribbling this right in
front of your door on my way to work)
HARVEY MORGENBLUTH
6-C

P.S. Hate to mention it, but your insecticide smells all the way out here in the hall! This means the little visitors get to climb the riser pipe up to yours truly! Thanx a lot, neighbor!

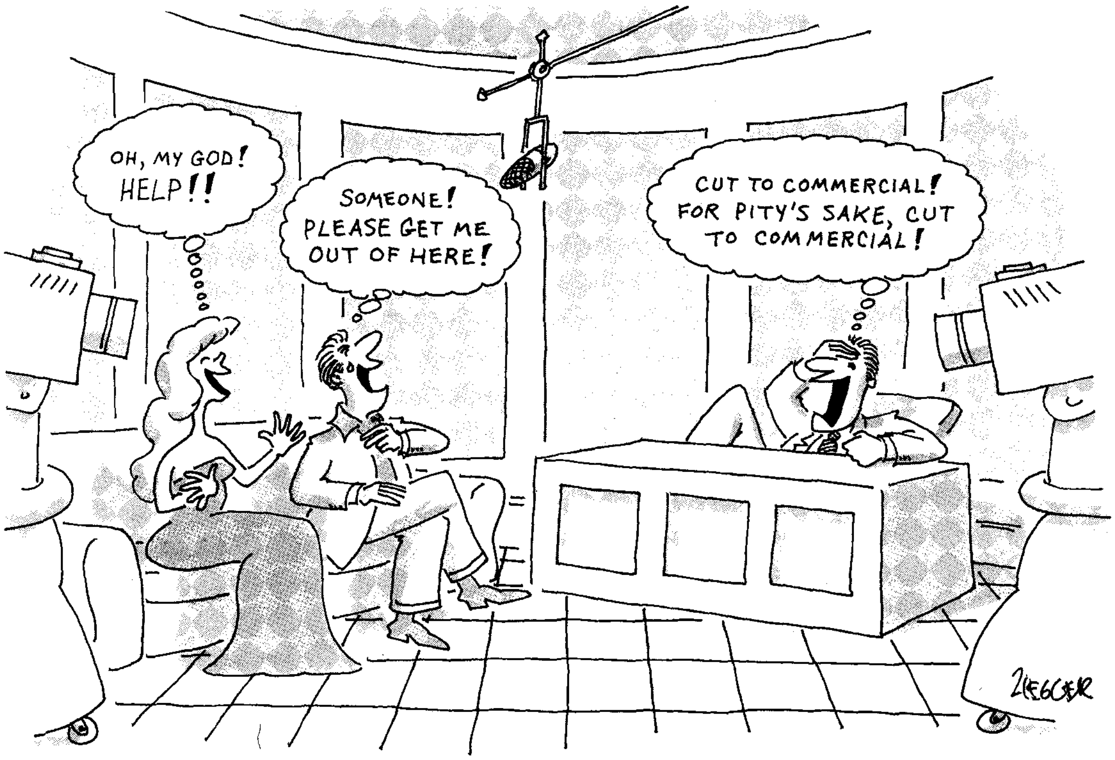
A page out of the *National Geographic:* a pair of civilizations adverse in temperament can live juxtaposed in identical environments. Archeologists report, for instance, that Israelites and Canaanites inhabited the same kinds of dwellings furnished with the same kinds of artifacts, and yet history testifies to intensely disparate cultures. 6-C's floor plan, Puttermesser reflected, was no different from 3-C's—she had seen that with her own eyes—but Harvey Morgenbluth had room for a piano and she did not. Harvey Morgenbluth gave parties and she did not. 6-C, the palace of exuberance. Harvey Morgenbluth had a business and Puttermesser currently had nothing.

Or, to reformulate it: despite exactly congruent apartment layouts, Harvey Morgenbluth belonged to the present decade and Puttermesser belonged to selected phantom literary flashbacks.

The day was secretly bright behind a gray fisherman's net about to dissolve into a full autumn rain. The coursing sidewalks, still dry, had the spotted look of rapid, dark rivers clogged with fish: all those young women in sneakers, clutching Channel 13 totes containing their office pumps and speeding toward desks, corridors, switchboards, computers, bosses, underlings. New York—Harvey Morgenbluth included—was going to work. And Puttermesser was idle. She was not idle: it was, instead, a meditative hiatus. She had stopped in her



"*Everyone is different and everyone is the same.*"


OH, MY GOD! HELP!!
SOMEONE! PLEASE GET ME OUT OF HERE!
CUT TO COMMERCIAL! FOR PITY'S SAKE, CUT TO COMMERCIAL!
ZIEGLER

tracks to listen, to detect; to learn something; to study. She was holding still, waiting for life to begin to happen—why not? Venturing out for air, she was compelled to invent daily destinations. Most often it was the supermarket over on Third, if only for an extra package of potato chips; she hated to run out. Or she fell in with the aerobic walkers among the more populated paths of Central Park, close to the protective rim of Fifth Avenue. Or she went mooning through the Morgan Library, the Cooper-Hewitt, the Guggenheim, the Frick; or kept up with the special exhibits at the Jewish Museum—the pitiable history of poor, hollow Captain Dreyfus (hair-raising posters, Europe convulsed), shadowy old chronicles of the Prague Golem. New York, crazed by mental plenitude. The brain could not take in so much as a morsel of it, even at the rate of a museum a day. Paintings, jars, ornaments, armor, manuscripts, tapestries, pillars, flutes, violas, harps; the rare, the sublime, the celestial! Forms and illuminations, how was it possible to swallow it all down?

Hand in hand. The parallel gaze. No one knows lonely sorrow who has not arrived at fifty-plus without George Lewes.

From the express line in the supermarket (salty chips, cheese-flavored) Puttermesser headed for the Society Library, where she picked up the Yale "Selections from George Eliot's Letters" (pleasantly thick but portable, as against the nine-volume complete), then gravitated—why not?—to the Metropolitan Museum: the rain had started, anyhow. Among the Roman portrait busts on the main floor Puttermesser ate a clandestine potato chip. A female sculpture in a niche—hallowed serenity wearing a head shawl—who certainly ought to have been the Virgin Mary turned out to be nothing more than a regular first-century woman, non-theological; she was what the Romans had instead of Kodak. Puttermesser resisted this pleasing notion. She was unwilling, just now, to marvel at the objects and hangings and statuary glimmering all around—the rare, the sublime, the celestial—in this exalted castle of masterworks. Her mind was on the "Letters." George Eliot's own voice against Puttermesser's heart. She was tired of 3-C, of reading in bed or at the kitchen table. What she wanted was a public bench; why not?

From Rome she passed through Egypt (the little sphinx of Sesostris III; the granary official Nykairu with his tiny wife—no higher than his knee—and his tiny daughter; King Sahura in his headdress and beard; Queen Hatshepsut in *her* headdress and beard; and the great god Amun; and powerful horses, and perfect gazelles), and through polished Africa (Nigeria, Gabon, Mali), and through Southern Europe, and through Flanders and Holland, and straight through the Impressionists. Immensity opened into immensity; there were benches in all those grand halls, and streams of worshipful, pale tourists ascending and descending the high marble stair, but she did not come to the recognizable right bench until Socrates beckoned.

At least his forefinger was up in the air. The ceiling lights of that place—it was French Neoclassical Painting of the Eighteenth Century—seemed wan and overused. The room was unpopular and mostly empty—who cares about French Neoclassical? Puttermesser's bench faced Socrates on his deathbed. Even from a distance away she could see him reaching for the bowl of hemlock with a bare, muscular right arm. Socrates was stocky, healthy, in his prime. Part of a toga was slung over the other arm—and there was the forefinger sticking up. He was exhorting his disciples—a whole lamenting crowd of disciples, of all ages, in various grief-stricken poses, like draped Greek statues. A curly-haired boy, an anguished graybeard, a bowed figure in a clerical cap, a man in a red cloak gripping Socrates' leg, a man weeping against a wall. Socrates himself was naked right down to below his navel. He had little red nipples and a ruddy face and a round, blunt nose and a strawberry-blond beard. He looked a lot like Santa Claus, if you could imagine Santa Claus with armpit hair.

Puttermesser settled in. It was a good bench, exactly right. There were not too many passersby, and the guard at the other end of the long hall was as indifferent as a cardboard cutout. Now and then she foraged for a potato chip;

the cellophane bag rattled and the guard did not stir.

> Assuredly [Puttermesser read in the "Letters"] if there be any one subject on which I feel no levity it is that of marriage and the relation of the sexes—if there is any one action or relation of my life which is and always has been profoundly serious, it is my relation to Mr. Lewes.
>
> . . .
>
> I do not wish to take the ground of ignoring what is unconventional in my position. I have counted the cost of the step I have taken and am prepared to bear, without irritation or bitterness, renunciation by all my friends. I am not mistaken in the person to whom I have attached myself. He is worthy of the sacrifice I have incurred, and my only anxiety is that he should be rightly judged.
>
> . . .
>
> We work hard in the mornings till our heads are hot, then walk out, dine at three and, if we don't go out, read diligently aloud in the evening. I think it is impossible for two human beings to be more happy in each other.

Impossible for two human beings to be more happy in each other!

A rush of movement along the far wall: a knot of starers had assembled just at "The Death of Socrates." They stared up, and then away, then up again. They were fixed on the lifted finger. Inexplicably, it was directing them to look somewhere else. The knot grew into a little, circling pack. Something was being surrounded over there, under Socrates' feet. The chips, the salt, the love adventures of the famous dead. Out of the blue, Puttermesser fell into a wild thirst—George Eliot and George Lewes were travelling on the Continent, illicitly declaring themselves husband and wife. At home in England they were scorned and condemned, but in the enlightened Europe of the eighteen-fifties the best salons welcomed them without criticism; they were introduced to poets, artists, celebrated intellectuals; Franz Liszt played for them at breakfast, smiling in rapture with his head thrown back.

That fuss around Socrates. Puttermesser got up to see—anyhow, she was in need of a water fountain. Some fellow had set up an easel. She inched her way into the starers and stared. The canvas on the easel was almost entirely covered: here were the mourning disciples; here was that prison staircase through a darkened archway; here were the visitors departing; here on the stone floor under Socrates' couch were the chain and manacle. That suffering youth hiding his eyes as he proffers the hemlock. All of it minutely identical to the painting on the wall, except that on the easel Socrates still had no face—the fellow in front of the easel was stippling out the strawberry-blond beard where it starts to curl over Socrates' clavicle. Puttermesser stared up at the painting and back down at the copy. One was the same as the other. You could not tell the difference. She stood at the rim of the crowd and through a kind of porthole watched the shadow of the lower lip gradually bloom into being; she had a better view of the easel than of the copyist. A bit of shoulder, a sleeve pushed up, a narrow hand manipulating the brush—that was all. The hand was horrifically meticulous; patient; slow; horrifically precise. It worked like some unearthly twinning machine. A machine for uncanny displacement. The brush licked and drew back, licked and drew back. The ancient strokes reappeared purely. Puttermesser took in the legend on the plaque—1787, Jacques-Louis David—and saw how, after two centuries, Socrates' nose was freshly forming, lick by lick, all over again. She licked her lip; she had never been thirstier.

Sea Breeze
MOTEL
NO VACANCY
CLOSED FOR THE SEASON

The drinking fountain was on another floor. She was gone ten minutes and came back to disappointment: the show was over. The room was nearly deserted. The fellow with the easel was dropping things into a satchel—he had already loaded his canvas onto some sort of dolly. He stopped to wipe a brush with a rag; then he rolled down his shirtsleeves and buttoned them. His shoes were beautifully polished.

WE LOVE IT NO END

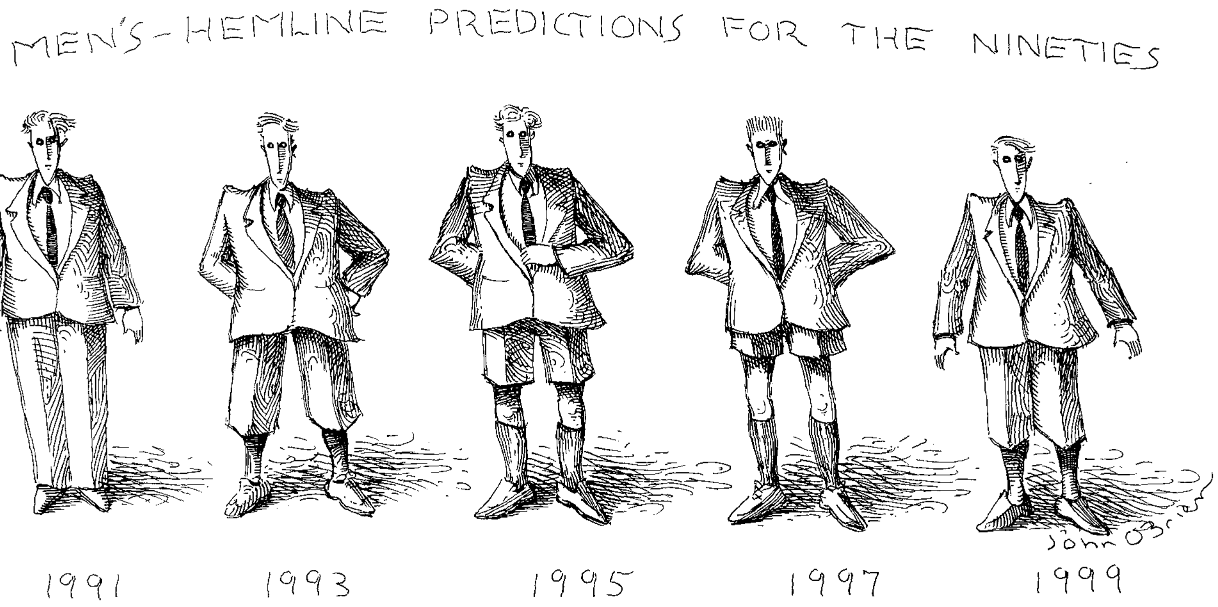
The sun set again and again
as we came along the road to Madrid
from Valencia. It went down in
several ways: (1) So white it could not be
seen. It turned the hillocks before it
black: cut-carbon rises and falls
on a white ground. The blue-gray clouds
across it could have been black, too.
But, no, the hills were black.

Then, when they fell, it was different.
(2) Sign-neon rose. The sky all colors
we cannot speak of: a strung string
of deep-pink pearls. (3) With the clouds,
a true line of false horizon made a lake
of light in the mountains.
All these are things that we mustn't say.
The sprung plain making a rise
in the road before us, the sun
fell at every rise. *Robles*, oaks,

stood short against a faint-
bright sky—with the *chopos* (poplars)
tall: *los álamos*. (4) The light-scalloped
edge of a dark cloud. The hills rose again
and covered it. Just when I thought
it had gone at last, we came
to a crest, it was there again,
in whatever color our new sky
chose to allow.

—Elizabeth Macklin

* * *


MEN'S-HEMLINE PREDICTIONS FOR THE NINETIES
1991
1993
1995
1997
1999
John O'Brien

• •

Puttermesser's old, neglected worldliness woke. She had not always been a loafer. Until only a little while ago she had moved among power brokers, deputies, opportunists, spoliators, the puffed up. Commissioners and chiefs. She had not always felt so meek. It is enervating to contemplate your fate too steadily, over too protracted a time: the uses of inquisitiveness begin to be forgotten. She thought of what she would ask the copyist—something about the mysteries of replication: what the point of it was. Plainly it wasn't a student exercise—not only because, though he was fairly young, he could hardly have been a student. He was well into his thirties, unless that modest, orderly mustache was designed to deceive. And, anyhow, the will to repetition—Puttermesser theorized that she had glimpsed absolute will—was too big, too indecently ambitious, for a simple exercise. It looked to be a kind of passion. The drive to reproduce what was already there, what did it hint, what could hang from it?

She asked, instead, "Did you get to finish the face?"

The young man held up an index finger in the direction of "The Death of Socrates." On the wall Socrates mimicked him. "It's finished, see for yourself."

"I mean in your version."

"What I do isn't a version. It's a different thing altogether."

An elbow poke of enchantment—aha, metaphysics! "I saw you *do* it. It comes out exactly the same. It's the same thing exactly. It's amazingly the same," Puttermesser said.

"It only looks the same."

"But you're copying!"

"I don't copy. That's not what I do."

Now he was being too metaphysical; she was confused. She was confused by delight. He stood there folding things up—first the rag, then the easel. Above the mustache his nostrils gaped in a doubling victory of their own. George Eliot's observation of Liszt—when the music was triumphant the nostrils dilated. "If you don't want to call it copying," Puttermesser almost began—it was going to be an argument—but instantly quit. The syllables stopped in her mouth. Thin cheeks. Those bright hairs under such a tidy nose. Without his hat it was hard to be sure. Nevertheless, she was sure. She had studied him, she had absorbed the veins of his right hand. She had observed him and not known him. The deceptions of dislocation, the misleadings! Uprooting dispels recognition; what is unexpected cannot be seen. The Victorian gentleman in the vestibule of 6-C. The dandy who had snubbed her because a young man is incapable of noticing a woman of fifty-plus. She knew him now. He was noticing her now. She had coerced it. She had made him look right at her.

"Aren't you a friend of Harvey Morgenbluth's? We met at his door," Puttermesser said. "In the middle of that party."

"I don't go to Harvey's parties. I go on business."

"Well, I live right under him. Three floors down." Fraudulent. It would be right to admit that she had never set eyes on Harvey Morgenbluth. "Was that a painting you had with you? In that big package?"

Clearly he did not remember her at all.

"Harvey photographs my things," he said.

"He copies your copies."

"They're not copies. I've explained that."

"But the result is just the same," Puttermesser insisted.

"I can't help the result. It's the act I care about. I don't copy, I reënact. And I do it my own way. I start from scratch and *do* it. How do I know if Socrates' face got finished first or last? You think I care about that? You think I care about what some dead painter feels? Or what anyone with a brush in his hand thought about a couple of hundred years ago? I do it my way."

Puttermesser's terrible thirst all at once rushed back; she believed it might be the wizening of her actual heart. Her organs were drinking her up and leaving her dry. She had abandoned all her acquaintance for the sake of the arrival of intellectual surprise. Mama, she called back to her mother through the dried-up marshes of so many lost decades, look, Mama, the brain is the seat of the emotions, I always told you so!

In her mother's voice, Puttermesser said, "It's used goods, isn't it? Shouldn't you begin with a new idea? With your own idea?"

"This *is* my idea. It's always my own idea. Nobody tells me what to do."

"But you don't make anything *up*—some new combination, something that never existed before," she urged.

"Whatever I do is original. Until I've done them my things don't exist."

"You can't say it's original to duplicate somebody else!"

"I don't duplicate." He was hitching his satchel onto his shoulder by its strap. "I reproduce. Can't you understand that? Babies get born all the time, don't they? And every baby's new and never existed before."

"No baby looks like any other," she protested.

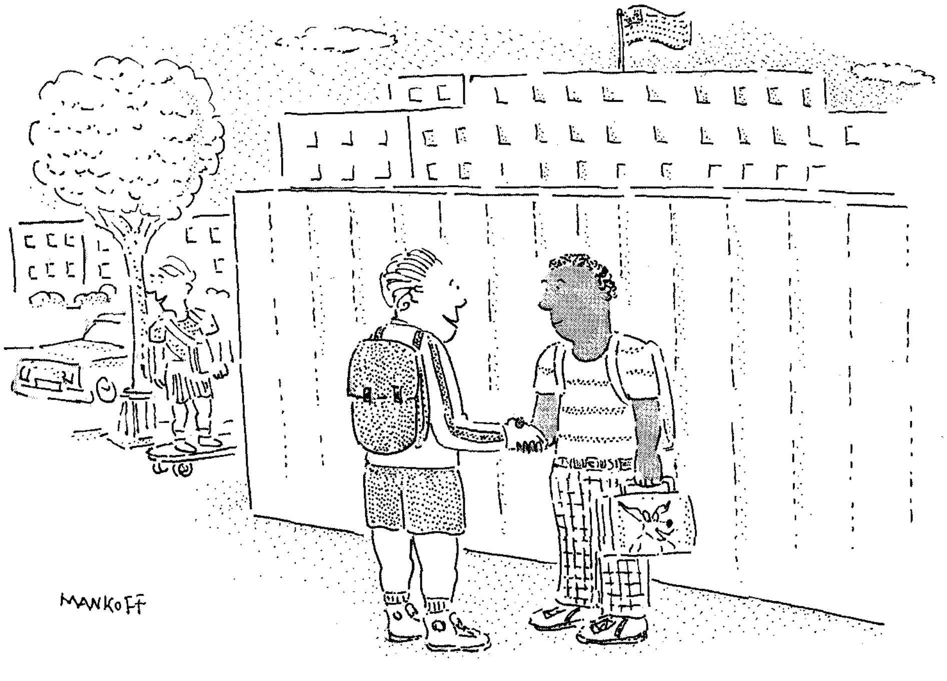
"Unless they're twins." The canvas went onto the dolly. "And then they lead separate lives from the first breath."

"A painting isn't alive," she nearly shouted.

"Well, *I* am—that's the point. Whatever I do is happening for the first time. Anything I make was never made before." He gave her a suddenly speculative look; she was startled to catch a shade of jubilation in it. Did he talk like this every day of his life? She saw straight into the black zeros of his pupils, bright islands washed round by faint ink. He poked one end of the folded easel toward her—it was all contraption, with wing nuts everywhere. "What would you think," he said, "of helping me with some of this stuff?"

They walked with the contraption between them. The "Letters" were squeezed under Puttermesser's arm. Again, immensity opened into immensity, hall into hall. They passed through majesties of civilizations, maneuvering around columns like a pair of workmen, drilling aisles through clusters of mooners and gapers. Precariously they wobbled down the great staircase. It was evident he could have managed all that equipment on his own; he was used to it. She was an attachment trailing along—an impediment—but it seemed to Puttermesser that there was another purpose in this clumsy caravan. A kind of mental heat ran through the rod that linked them. He had decided to clip the two of them together for a little time. She understood that she had happened on an original. A mimic with a philosophy! A philosophy that denied mimicry! And he wasn't mistaken, he wasn't a lunatic. He was, just as he said, someone with a new idea. He had a claim on legitimacy. He was guilty with an explanation; or he wasn't guilty at all. The thing jerking and bobbing between them, with its sticks and screws, was an excitement—it made her keep her distance, but it led her. It was a sort of leash. She followed him, like an aging dog, sidelong.

Puddles on the sidewalk; she had missed the rain altogether. The street was silted with afternoon light. Puttermesser surrendered her end of the easel—she hated to give it up. Found! George Lewes, George Lewes in New York! He had a kind of thesis, a life's argument. He had nerve. "I'll come by," he said. "I'll drop in. The next time I have to be at Harvey's place. Here, take one of these. It tells all."



"It's a done deal. Have your au pair call my au pair."

He set easel, satchel, dolly down on the pavement. Then he pulled out a little red case and drew from it a white card. There was a telephone number accompanied by two lines of red type:

RUPERT RABEENO
REENACTMENTS OF THE MASTERS

Puttermesser, who had not laughed in a month, laughed: she was ready to be happy. "Do people know what this means when you hand it out?"

"It's self-explanatory."

She was still laughing; it made her as bold as an old politician. "Why would you drop in?"

"To explain the card." He bent to pick up easel, satchel, dolly. "Don't you want me to? Would you rather I didn't?"

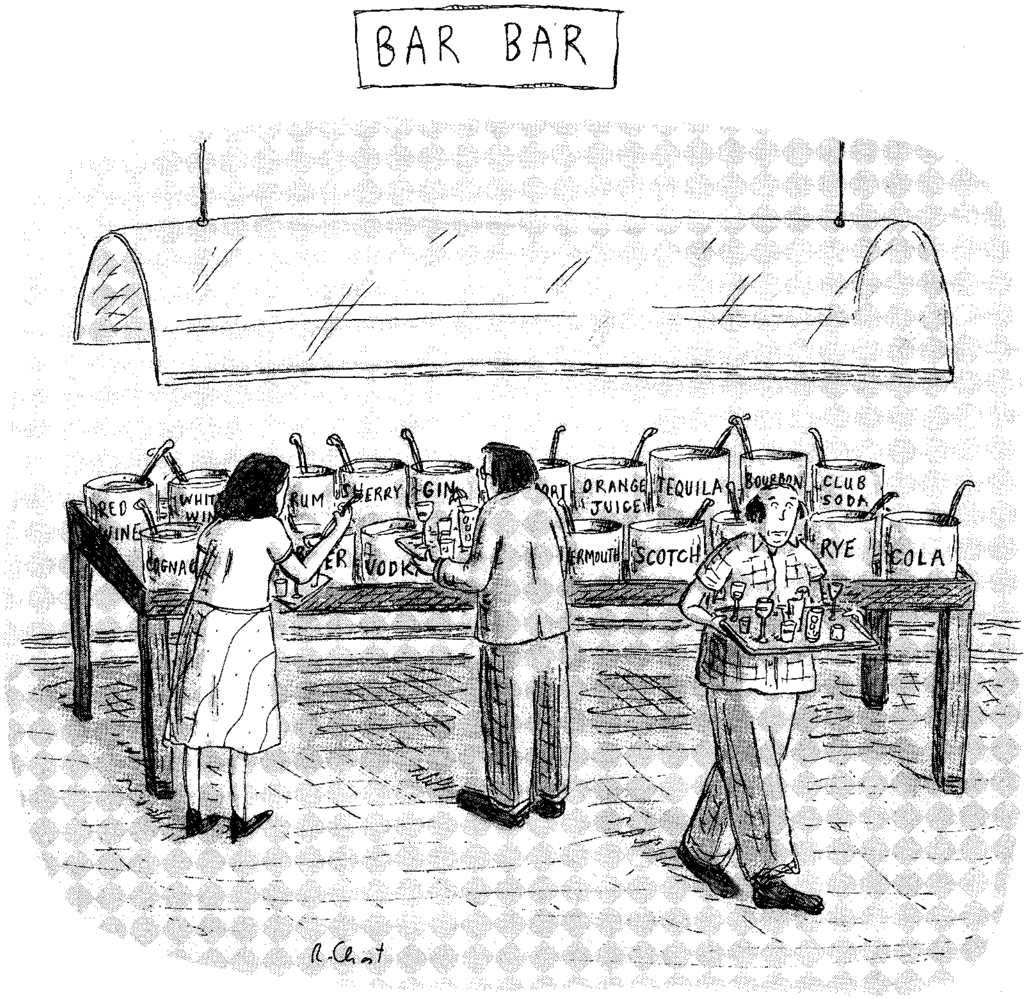
"Come right now," she said. "I'm dying of thirst. I'll make some tea."

II. THE NIGHT READERS

PUTTERMESSER'S favorite tea was Celestial Seasonings Swiss Mint—each tea bag had an instructive or uplifting quotation attached to it. Henry Ward Beecher: "Compassion will cure more sins than condemnation." Victor Hugo: "Laughter is the sun that drives winter from the human face." Ralph Waldo Emerson: "Make the most of yourself, for that is all there is of you."

The box, too, was imprinted with wisdom. Rupert Rabeeno read aloud, " 'I have always thought the actions of men the best interpreters of their thoughts'—John Locke," and twisted the box around. "This next one's Nietzche. 'He who has a why to live can bear with almost any how.' "

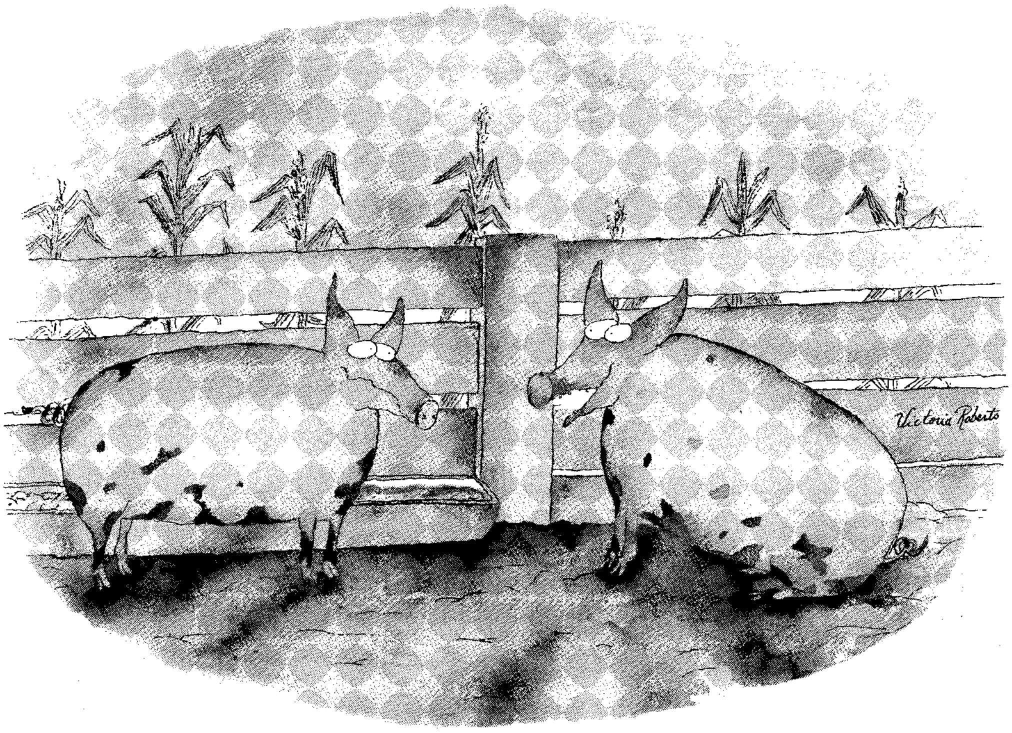
Reading from the tea bag tags was only a joke, a diversion. What they were really reading from was "Middlemarch." This was the beginning of a project: they were going to do all of George Eliot's novels—out loud, taking turns. The early chapters galloped, but after a while talk seemed to intervene; they forgot what had happened at



the start of a chapter, and had to repeat it. Sometimes they skipped the reading altogether. Rupert Rabeeno was not one of those people who allow their lives to be obscured by the vapor of the merely inferential. He was amazingly explicit: he made Puttermesser *see* things. In a month or so she had been led through all the particulars of his childhood. She knew the contents of his mother's dusty jewelry tray—her high-school class ring, four pairs of screw-on celluloid earrings, one necklace of five-and-dime pearls, one broken watch in the shape of a violin—and exactly where his father used to keep the key to the store safe (in the toe of an out-of-style Buster Brown Mary Jane). His father had run a shoe store in a town outside of Atlanta. Rupert's two married sisters, much older, grandmothers several times over, were settled in Tampa and Dallas. He claimed, besides, two mothers. The first had died when he was only nine: it became his habit to dream over the sad remnants of her few poor trinkets. He thought he could catch a reminiscent sniff of her dress fuming out of the tray in her old chifforobe. His father had put it down in the cellar of the shoe store. His father's second wife—strong and rosy—worked in the shoe store just as Rupert's mother had, and to woo his affection rushed home to give him milk and chocolate graham crackers after school, just as his mother had. But he threw over his milk glass on purpose, and his stepmother watched him drag a spiteful finger through the spill, pulling the wet lines of it into a marvel of a cat with a lifted tail. After that he was sent for "art lessons" on Thursday afternoons to a little local academy, where his classmates were mostly girls. Tap dancing was in progress just across the corridor, accompanied by a quaking piano; it was a humiliating place altogether. He didn't *sound* very Southern, Puttermesser noticed: he had left the South a long time ago, and had travelled everywhere. Some years back, he said, he had fallen into a "subject," his first, at the Louvre: it was the "Officier de Chasseurs à Cheval de la Garde Impériale Chargeant," by Théodore Géricault. And before that he had done some translating from the Catalan; and a stint, before that, in "The Changeling," on the London fringe, playing De Flores.

Puttermesser heard all this with a formidable sharpness—he was charging her with the will to take hold of him. It was as if he had given her a razor to cut him out with: the whole figuration of his history. He wanted her to know precisely what he added up to. He discharged everything he had done—he had done a lot—in a shower of color and anecdote; he was against elusiveness. Stories, worn through retelling, shot out from him: she felt the knots and burrs of reused thread. And portraits: his curly-haired sisters, their husbands (a couple of doctors, one a gastroenterologist, the other a pediatrician), their children, the strangers their children had married; but he was lost to all of them now. He had left his family behind. He spoke of the curiously perfected reflections of the bridges over the Seine, of how when you looked at them you couldn't tell which was the true world, the one in the air or the one in the river; and of the part-time job he had held at eighteen, in a grimy record-pressing plant, listening over and over again for flaws in the grooves; and of how he had once been hired to teach English in a loft on West Fifteenth Street to fearful, pathetic newcomers up from the Caribbean, under a half-mad "principal" who required every pupil to trace over the principal's model sentences in green ink; and of how the shoe store, always dark and unpopulated, like an empty movie theatre, with its double row of chairs back to back, had all at once surprisingly begun to flourish and bustle, fevered, it seemed, by his stepmother's quick run over the old brown carpeting—so that the two of them, his nearsighted father and his rubicund second mother, could dare to open a second store in the next town, called, like the first, THE PAIR FAIR.

It was almost too much. Puttermesser would not have minded a bit



“Well, pickle my trotters!”

more mystery, the trail of something shielded, a secret stowed in a crevice. A spot, here and there, of opacity. He told her, with a compulsive comic vividness that shook her, of his clandestine night wedding, at twenty-three, to Cecilia Almendra, a little Argentine cabaret singer who turned out to be a runaway. Señor and Señora Almendra found them out and took the bride back to Buenos Aires—“before the consummation,” he said. Señor Almendra (born Mandel, a refugee from the European cataclysm) raged; Señora Almendra sobbed. The girl had been registered at N.Y.U. and was supposed to be studying psychology; she never went to classes and wrote lying letters home. Her hours in the “cabaret”—a filthy bar on Avenue A—lasted until five in the morning. A bedroom farce with an unrumpled bed.

In the decade or so since, Rupert had lived without romance—not that kind, anyhow. Paris, and then London, and then Pittsburgh. He was sick of being a seedy wanderer bartering the baubles of trick and knack. In granite Pittsburgh he worked for a provincial satrap, the monarch of an intrastate railroad, and for half a dozen years threw himself into designing billboards. His grand, noisy posters, in riotous orange and purple and drumming red, jumped out at every station like oversized postage stamps connecting town with town. All the commuter lines that led to Pittsburgh were stitched together by Rupert’s posters—he thought of them as brilliant beads strung on wire tracks. And he thought of himself as a polychromatic jack-in-the-box, ambushing the public. After the billboards, he switched to decorating cereal boxes. It pleased him that the selfsame jug, yellow and two-handled, overflowing with banana flakes, cropped up on tables from Tokyo to Tel Aviv; repetition wasn’t far from continuity, and continuity not far from eternity. But in the end he didn’t care for assignments and projects and campaigns. He disliked art directors and company bosses. Granite Pittsburgh crumbled for him; it was no better than a heap of sand draining through an hourglass. He missed being sovereign over himself.

Rupert Rabeeno was glutted with his own life—who isn’t, and why not? He liked to tell it over and over, as if in the telling he could keep it from shrinking away into the smallness of the nearly forgotten. He let go of nothing he had ever known or seen or felt. Or not felt. Whatever had happened once he meant to make happen again. Reprise invigorated him. And Puttermesser was the same. It came to her in a rush of deliverance as wild as cognition, wilder than consternation—she was the same, the very same, no different! Whatever had happened once, she conspired, through a density of purposefulness, to redraw, redo, replay; to translate into the language of her own respiration. A resurrection of sorts. Wasn’t her dream of having George Lewes again—a simulacrum of George Lewes—exactly the same as Rupert Rabeeno’s wanting to make things happen again? Wasn’t she, all on her own, a mistress of reënactment?

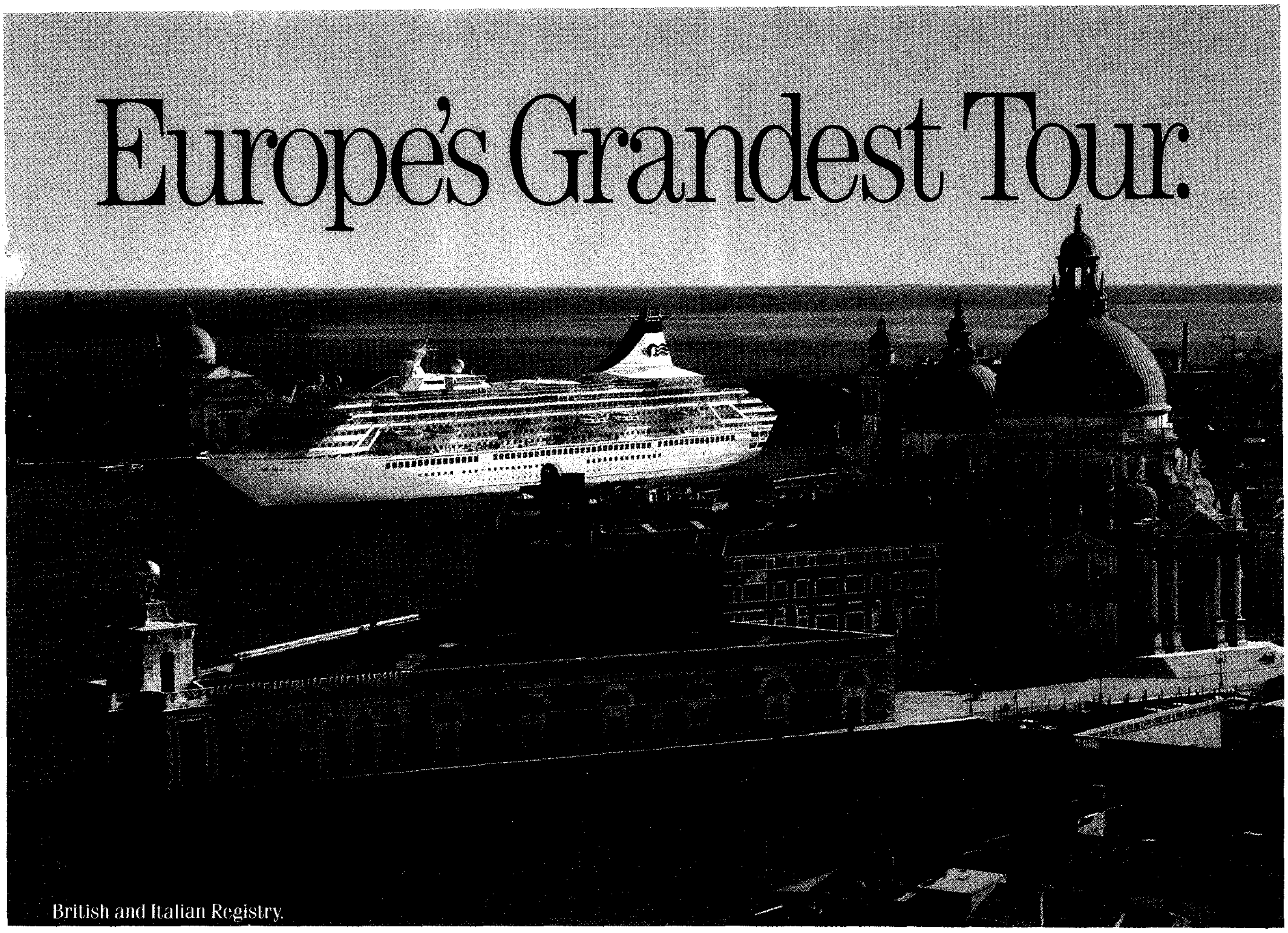
On a snowy afternoon in early January—Rupert Rabeeno was just back from delivering one of his great flat parcels upstairs at 6-C—Puttermesser decided to tell her idea about George Lewes. It was less an idea than an instinct; it was a burning; it made her shy. She suffered—he might mock her; she would be humiliated. And the awful discrepancy, the moat of age. The first George Lewes (would Rupert Rabeeno consent to be the second?) was born in 1817. George Eliot was born in 1819. A match altogether on the mark, generationally intelligent, so to speak; two years between them, she nearly thirty-five, he thirty-seven, as decently appropriate as could be. Puttermesser’s shame stung. A hag. A crone. Estrogen dwindling in her cells. Rupert Rabeeno was too young—he was two decades too young—to be a candidate for a simulacrum of George Lewes. A gap like that is a foolishness in whatever century.

She watched him rummage in her clogged inch of pantry. He plucked up a can of tomato-and-vegetable soup and emptied it into a pot. Then he poured in some water from Puttermesser’s blue teakettle and began to stir. She was used to this: he loved soup. He brought two or three cans every time he turned up.

She had calculated just how to get it said. An announcement. “October 23, 1854,” she started off. And read: “ ‘I have been long enough with Mr. Lewes to judge of his character on adequate grounds, and there is therefore no absurdity in offering my opinion as evidence that he is worthy of high respect.’ ” The moist smell of onions heating in the soup curled around them. “Written,” she explained, “right after George Eliot and George Lewes went off to Weimar together.”

The soup splashed into two of Put-

THE LOVE BOAT℠



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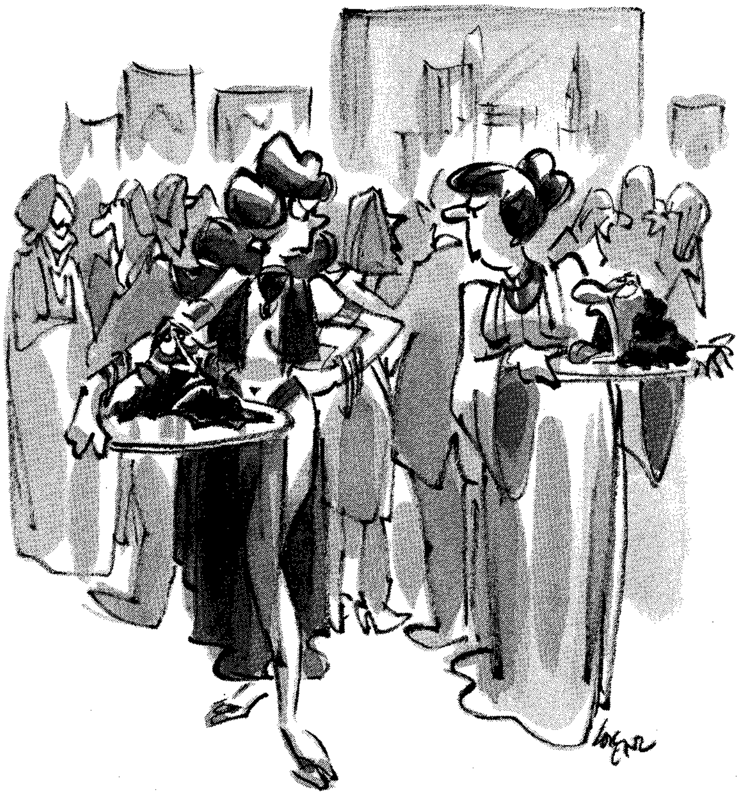

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termesser's china bowls. "Why Weimar?"

"Goethe's city. Lewes was working on a book about Goethe. He was always working on *some*thing."

"Sit down and eat your veggies," Rupert Rabeeno commanded. "That woman's a prig. Too damn solemn."

Puttermesser said, "It's Lewes I'm thinking of." George Lewes, lighthearted, airy, a talker!

"He's on your mind a whole lot. So is she."

A clot of embarrassment coarsened her throat. "It's only a feeling," Puttermesser said. "A sort of . . . you know, a conceit. A literary conceit." She put her head down. It was unseemly. She was too old, by twenty years. "It's about ideal friendship."

He said, "I still don't see the point of Weimar. Going off somewhere. There's no point to it. We can stay right here."

So he understood her to the marrow. He was all quicksilver; he was ready. She saw how, once she had yielded up her little burning, he could better it, he could complicate it, he could shake the ash of theory from it and fire it into life. They drove through the rest of "Middlemarch" without interruption; or almost. Often she followed him out into the wintry town—after "The Death of Socrates" he had moved over to the Frick. In his own place, on West Fifty-ninth, a studio with a Castro Convertible, he boiled up a can of mushroom-and-barley. It seemed to Puttermesser that all the singles who had ever lived in this solitary room before him were roiling like phantoms in the steam. His suitcase was tidy and waiting—fresh shirts and turtlenecks, his shoe polish and his own toothpaste. His clothes were orderly, well brushed. She asked him where he kept his valet. He laughed; he was exhilarated. "No room for Jeeves! I hide him in my sleeves!" He showed her his favorite lamp—indispensable, he said, for snugness. He carried the lamp and the suitcase, she carried the shade. Laughing, they left shoe holes in the snow; at the curb the new snow was folding itself over last week's old black humps.

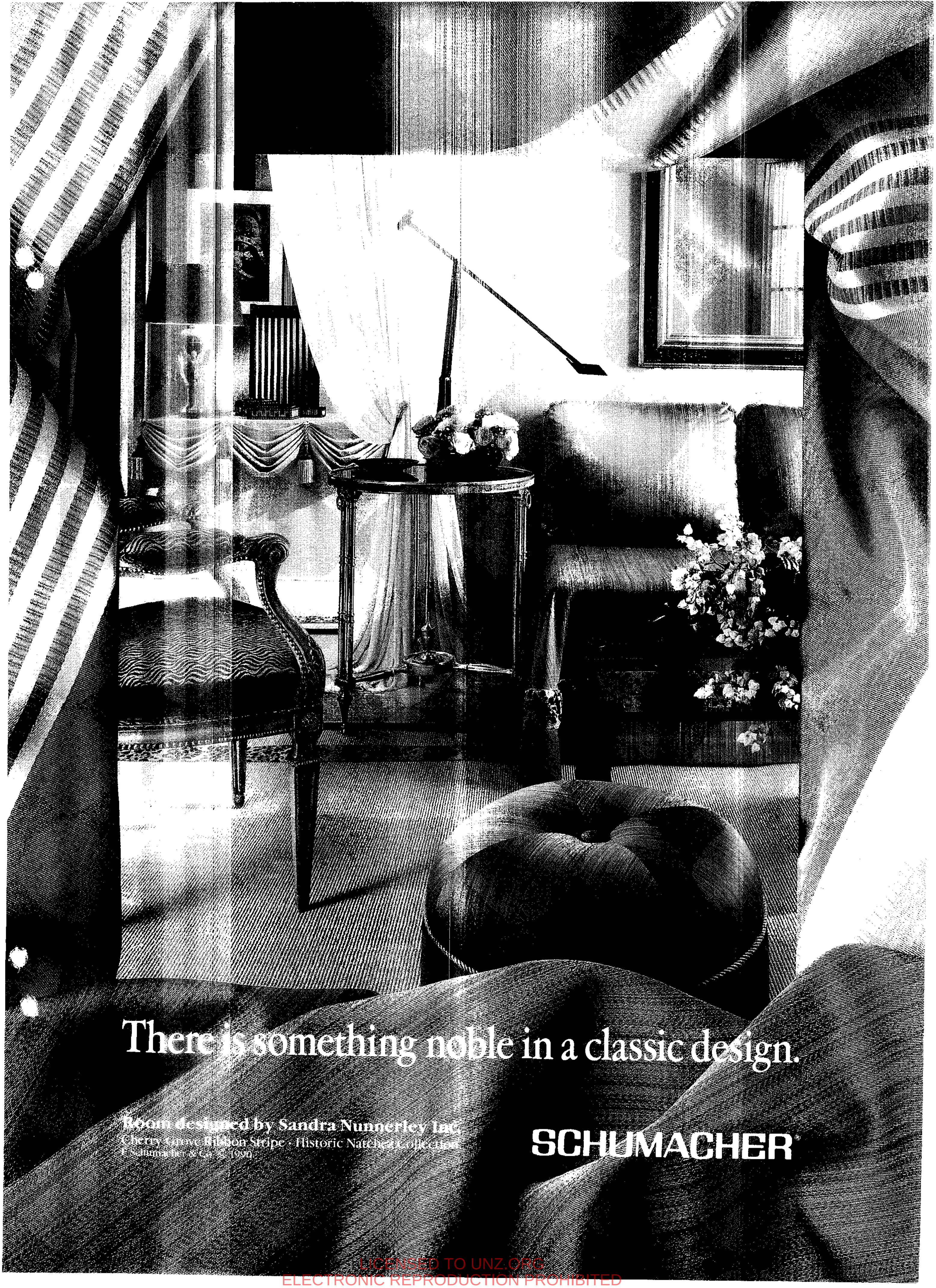
Rupert Rabeeno's lampshade was as wide as a bat's wing and cast phosphorescent reflections on the walls. At night under that greenish, fishy light—3-C was now spookily undersea—they finished "The Mill on the Floss." Rupert asked what next.

Puttermesser considered. "Not 'Romola.' George Eliot said that book was what made her into an old woman."

"Let's do the life," Rupert said.

They tramped in the New York slush to the Society Library and took out all the George Eliot biographies there were, including the one Puttermesser had returned not long before. Rupert wanted to see how they matched up, whether someone writing about George Eliot in, say, the nineteen-eighties was going to turn up the same George Eliot as someone writing in the nineteen-forties, or in the eighteen-nineties. It was like reënacting a landscape a hundred years later, he said. The same grove of trees under the same sky, but different. What altered it was whoever was looking at it. Puttermesser almost followed the argument but was indifferent to it anyhow. Copyist's talk. She didn't care about any of that. She rejoiced, she was anointed. The germ of her secret seeing had breathed itself alive. Here they were, side by side, reading aloud, an indoor January pastoral; she had passed through the sacred gate, she had entered ideal friendship. Rupert's reading voice was dark, with now and then a sharp scratchy click in it, the call of some imaginary bird—it was a chirp she could not hear in ordinary conversation. It meant he was seized. Snared. Sometimes a tic convulsed his eyelid; he was agitated, he was engulfed. He surpassed her in her little burning, he urged her on.

In her cube of a kitchen she told him her convoluted work history, and admitted to sour Rappoport, a Canadian with a wife at home in Toronto, who had once been her lover. Rupert, concentrating, beat at the soup—it was lumpy—and shook the eggs in their pan. After supper he cut her hair. The wisps fell from her nape and forehead, all over her shoulders and the floor. She watched in the mirror as he snipped, evening out the sides: it struck her that she was not yet a hag. Tiny hyphens of hair-cuttings fuzzed her neck; he blew



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them down inside her blouse and over her back. Her mouth in the mirror was content. Her tongue slipped out like a shining lizard. He never thought of her as unnatural; he never thought of her as too old. Nothing grotesque lay between them. She believed that now. They were friends, ideal friends. She saw how he had become more zealous than she.

When he went upstairs to Harvey Morgenbluth's she stayed behind. It was all business up there. She didn't care for Rupert's business; it opened into discord and combat. His business was postcards. He copied the masters. Harvey Morgenbluth photographed Rupert's doubles, in full color and full size, and reduced the photos before they went off first to the printer and then to a jobber for distribution. This was Rupert's living. "The Death of Socrates," for instance, with Socrates' face filled in, reappeared in packets of a hundred, sealed in transparent plastic. One hundred identically lifted Socratic fingers. One hundred identical youths bearing one hundred identical bowls of hemlock. There was a Rubens—"Venus and Adonis"—with a Cupid and a pair of dogs; there was van Gogh's "Irises" and Manet's "Woman with a Parrot." There was Turner's "Grand Canal, Venice," all ship and sky and water and misty distance. She thought him a genius—a genius ventriloquist; he could penetrate any style and any form, from a petal to an earlobe. He was at home in minuteness or in vista. The name of both painting and painter were printed on the back of each card—and, also, in minuscule letters: "Rupert Rabeeno, Reenactments of the Masters."

This was the subject of their small war. "If all it comes down to is postcards," Puttermesser said, "you might just as well send Harvey Morgenbluth into the Met with a camera."

"In the first place, he wouldn't be allowed. Which," Rupert said, "is beside the point anyhow."

"No, it's not. Every museum in the world sells postcards of its paintings."

"Exactly," Rupert said. "These are postcards of *my* paintings."

"It's a fraud."

This made him jolly. "Counsellor!"

"I didn't say it's illegal. I'm not talking about copyright laws. There aren't any copyright laws for French Neoclassicals. That leaves you with your conscience."

"My conscience!" He reared back as if she had smacked him, and let out a scratchy laugh. It reminded her of the snap, as of an unearthly pod bursting, of his reading voice.

"People are going to look at *your* Grand Canal and think it's Turner's."

"I made it," he said, with so much clarity that Puttermesser felt she could stare right through the unpainted circles of his eyes into whatever murmured behind them.

This murmur swept her. She brought his whole head into her arms. "Rupert, Rupert," she said. A fabricator of doubles, but he had no duplicity. She nearly believed in his case: that these weren't doubles he fabricated. It wasn't a manner or mannerisms he took from his prototypes. It was—could it be true?—their power.

She recited: " 'To see Kean act was like reading Shakespeare by flashes of lightning.' "

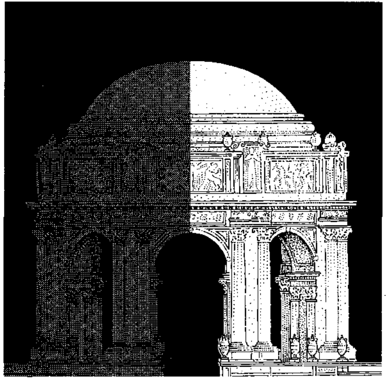
"What's that?"

"Coleridge said it about some famous actor."

And so their skirmish ended. She could not keep it up. If he didn't invent the work of his hands, he had, anyhow, invented himself. He wasn't a swindler, he wasn't an impostor. The postcards were his very own. She came on them in bookshops, and realized she had often seen them there before. A rack of his cards stood near the door when she went into a stationer's for a typewriter ribbon. There on the top tier was Picasso's "Gertrude Stein"—that autonomous skull, tile forehead, mouse's chin. But Rupert had made it.

III. THE UNSPEAKABLE JOY

THEIR night reading under the sea-green lamp: the names of the long, long dead. Brabant, Bray, Chapman, Rufa, Cara, Sara, Barbara Bodichon, Edith Simcox, Johnny Cross. Spectres. Of these, only Herbert Spencer survives recognizably on his own. George Eliot dared to beg him to marry her: she was infatuated. She had not yet met George Lewes. "I promise not to sin any more in the same way," she pleaded when Spencer turned her down; she could not imagine that he would end his days a bachelor. The philosopher of evolution could not evolve. "If you become attached to someone else, then I must die, but until then I could gather courage to work and make life valuable, if only I had you near me. I do not ask you to



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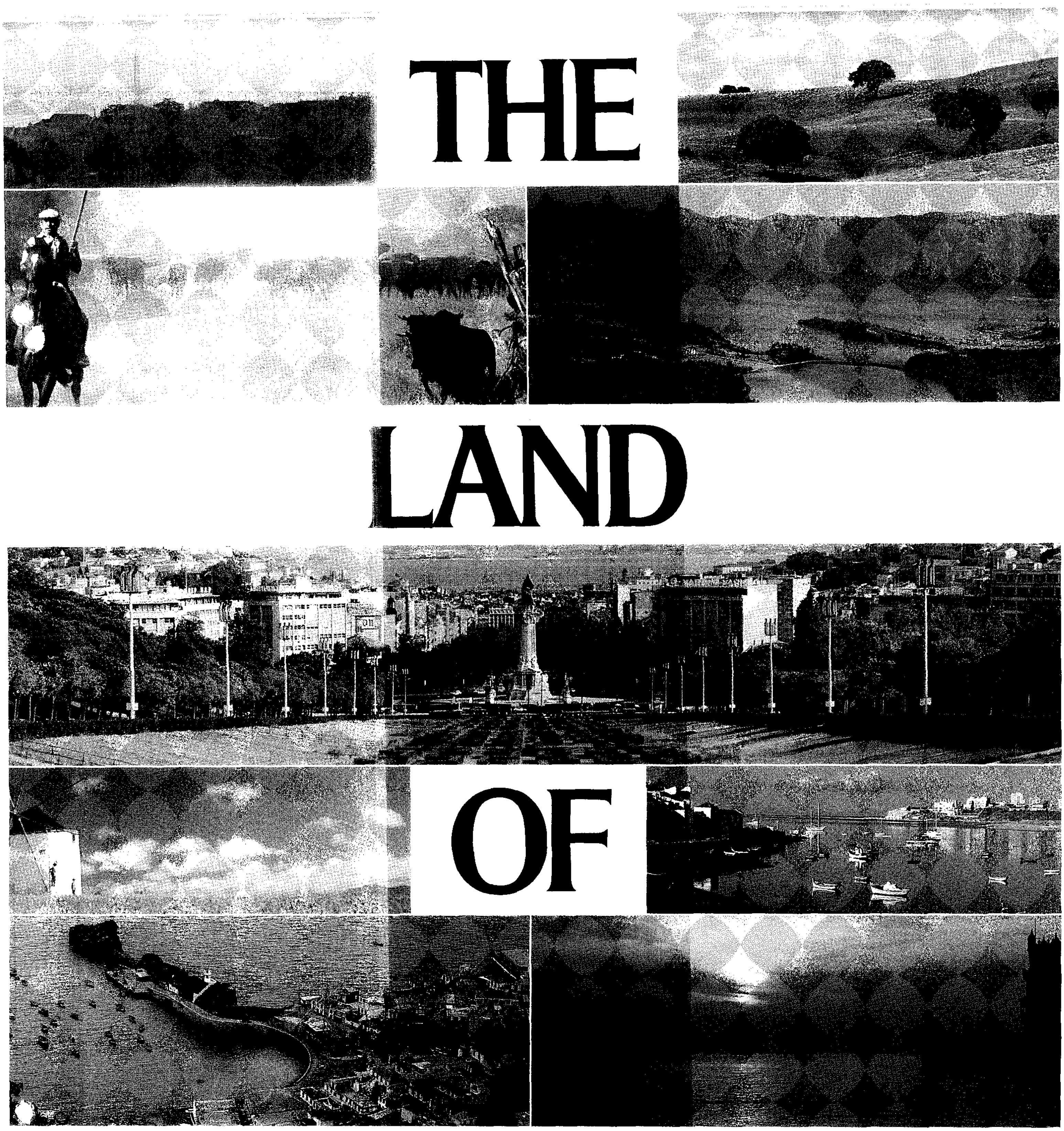

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Rupert was reading this from the "Letters." Puttermesser slammed down her eyelids. She had those pitiful phrases by heart. The abjectness, the yearning. Dry Herbert Spencer, a man shut off; no feeling could invade him. But one day he brought George Lewes with him to the *Westminster Review*, where George Eliot—she was still plain Miss Evans—was working as editor. Lewes was playful, impudent, jokey; his face was pitted, he had a little, neat nose with big nostrils. He was an apt mimic and told clever stories without a speck of meanness. George Eliot at first thought him ugly; she was ugly enough herself. People said he resembled a monkey; they said she resembled a horse. He had free tickets to the theatre and invited her along. He reviewed plays, books, art, music. His mind was all worldly versatility. He wrote on French and German literature, he wrote plays, he made a study of insanity, he wrote on history and science and philosophy, on anemones and Comte and Charlotte Brontë. She translated Strauss, Feuerbach, Spinoza; she wrote on Matthew Arnold, Tennyson, Browning, Thoreau, Ruskin. She read Homer, Plato, Aristophanes, Theocritus; she read Drayton and a history of Sanskrit.

"What a pair, what a pair," Puttermesser said.

She had discovered something disconcerting: Rupert confessed that until now George Eliot had been no more than a rumor for him. In high school in the town near Atlanta they had read "Silas Marner" in sophomore year. That was all of George Eliot he was acquainted with. The rest was new. He had never before looked into a biography of George Eliot. He had never heard of George Lewes or Johnny Cross or all those others.

"Why didn't you say so when we began? When we started the reading?"

"I thought you could tell." He put his hand on her hand. How dependable he was; how eager to satisfy. "Anyhow, I'm catching up. In fact I'm *caught* up. What do you know that I don't?"

She could not contradict him. It was as if he had swum into her brain and swallowed up its spiny fish, great and small, as they flickered by. Puttermesser was ravished: it was true, there was no difference between them. Under the sea-green lamp he was caught, he knew what she knew.

It was Lewes she wanted him to know.

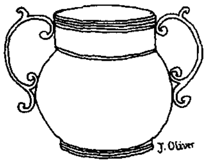
They read until they were dried up. They read until their eyes skittered and swelled. The strangeness in it did not elude them: where George Eliot and George Lewes in their nighttime coziness had taken up Scott, Trollope, Balzac, Turgenev, Daudet, Sainte-Beuve, Madame D'Agoult (Lewes recorded all this in his diary), she and Rupert read only the two Georges. Puttermesser discussed what this might mean. It wasn't for "inspiration," she pointed out—she certainly wasn't mixing herself up with a famous dead Victorian. She was conscious of her Lilliputian measure: a worn-out city lawyer, stunted as to real experience, a woman lately secluded, eaten up with loneliness, melancholia ground into the striations of her face. The object was not inspiration but something sterner. The object was just what it had been for the two Georges—study. What Puttermesser and Rupert were studying was a pair of heroic boon companions. Boon companions! It was fellowship they were studying, it was nearness.

"George and George," Rupert said. "Practically a couple of twins."

"They were *lovers*," Puttermesser corrected.

In the mornings he snatched up his satchel and dolly and clattering easel and headed for the Frick. Puttermesser marvelled at the soaked threads of the canvas, glistening with bright, heavy oil. In the evenings, after supper, they pushed on with the two Georges. A history of money and family. The money went to Agnes, Lewes's easygoing, adulterous wife, and her brood of children by another man. Agnes in old age, unrepentant and very fat, with small, fat fingers twiddling in her lap, supported until her death by George Eliot's earnings: they mooned over her photo in one of those bricklike volumes that littered the kitchen chairs. But to Lewes's sons George Eliot was "Mutter." One died young—she nursed and mourned him as if he were her own. Another was attached to her all her life. Lewes, meanwhile, was coaxing her to try her hand at writing stories, though privately he doubted whether she could master drama. Overnight she bloomed into greatness. And was a pariah all the same. Her brother Isaac, still in the Midlands of their childhood, would have nothing to do with her. She wrote him and he refused to answer. His sister was living with a man who had a wife. His sister could not be received in respectable drawing rooms. In the end the world came to her. A daughter of Queen Victoria contrived to be presented to George Eliot.

Rupert read: " 'Our unspeakable joy in each other has no other alloy than the sense that it must one day end in parting.' " For twenty-five years George Eliot and George Lewes had their unspeakable joy—each other, and fame, and homage, and Europe, and a carriage of their own, and comforts, and the admiration of the best minds, and the hoverings and adorations of the young, among them Johnny Cross. Johnny Cross helped Lewes find a house in the country—he was good at all sorts of practical things. George Eliot called him nephew. "My dear Nephew," her letters to him began; and ended, "Your affectionate Aunt." He was a tall, comely young man of twenty-nine, introduced to her by his mother on a holiday in Rome. After Rugby, he went to New York to work in a branch of the family bank, and returned to London to do the same. George Eliot met Nephew Johnny Cross on George Lewes's fifty-second birthday.



IV. THE AWFUL DISCREPANCY

THE death scenes and their aftermath fell to Puttermesser. They were familiar to her, and unimportant. It was the living Lewes she cared for, the salvational Lewes, the merry Lewes of transformation. George Lewes died at sixty-one, in a dank November. He had always been sickly. During his final hours the doctors bustled in and out. In front of the Priory their coachmen cracked noisy jokes. George Eliot did not go to the funeral. Day after day she shut herself up in her bedroom with Lewes's books and microscope; she howled and howled. Only the servants heard.

Here Puttermesser stopped. It was over.

Rupert said, "We ought to do it."

"Do what?'

"Get married."

"*They* didn't marry," Puttermesser said, and closed the book.

"Hey, don't quit—there's more."

"No more Lewes."

"There's all the rest."

"You don't like her on her own. You called her a prig."

"That was before I knew her. Do the rest," he persisted.

So she went on with it. Two months after Lewes's death, George Eliot wrote to Johnny Cross, "Dearest Nephew, I do need your affection. Every sign of care for me from the beings I respect and love is a help to me.... In a week or two I think I shall want to see you. Sometimes even now I have a longing.... Your affectionate Aunt." And on a brilliant May day, at St. George's Church in Hanover Square, eighteen months after she had howled over the parting from Lewes, George Eliot married Johnny Cross. The new wife was sixty. Johnny's mother had died within days of Lewes. He was an orphan of forty.

Rupert danced around Puttermesser's tiny bedroom, where they had set up the sea-green lamp on Puttermesser's teak desk. "Look at that, look at that!"

"She needed someone to lean on," Puttermesser said. "It was her temperament."

"The body was hardly cold!"

"You can't lean on a dead man."

"*Aha*." Now he took her by the wrists. "Didn't I tell you that from the start? That first day in the Met? I told you—*I'm* the one who's alive!"

Puttermesser wondered at this. "Well, there's the honeymoon."

"I'll do the honeymoon!" Rupert said.

She watched him reconstruct Johnny Cross. Johnny Cross was, anyhow, a puzzlement. No one knew him, really. He was expected to be "deep," and he wasn't. He was handsome and genial and athletic and rich. He was no intellectual, though he worked at it gamely, in the same plucky way he chopped down a clump of trees or devoutly smacked at a tennis ball. He was a tremendous swimmer. He wasn't even remotely a writer, but he did turn out one astonishing book—astonishing chiefly because Johnny Cross had written it: "George Eliot's Life." The title was as obvious and direct as he was. He plugged away at it after she died: it was a genuflection.

Rupert saw quickly that the heap of biographies they had been reciting from—including Johnny Cross's—

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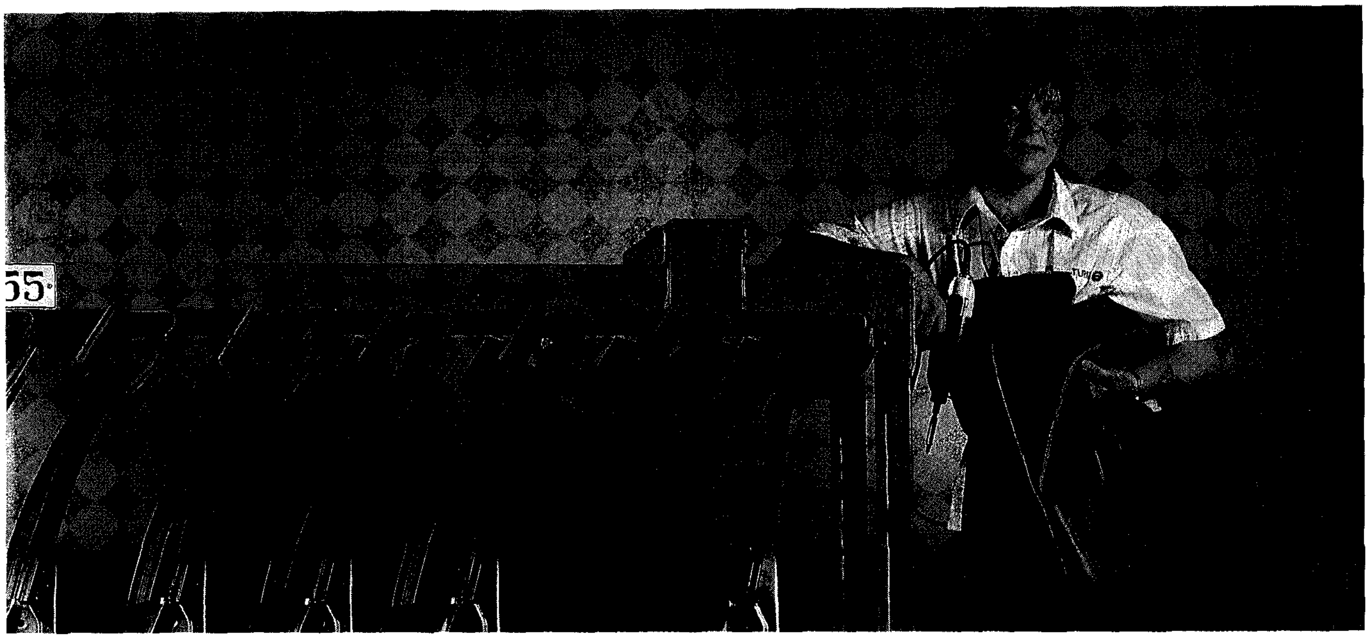

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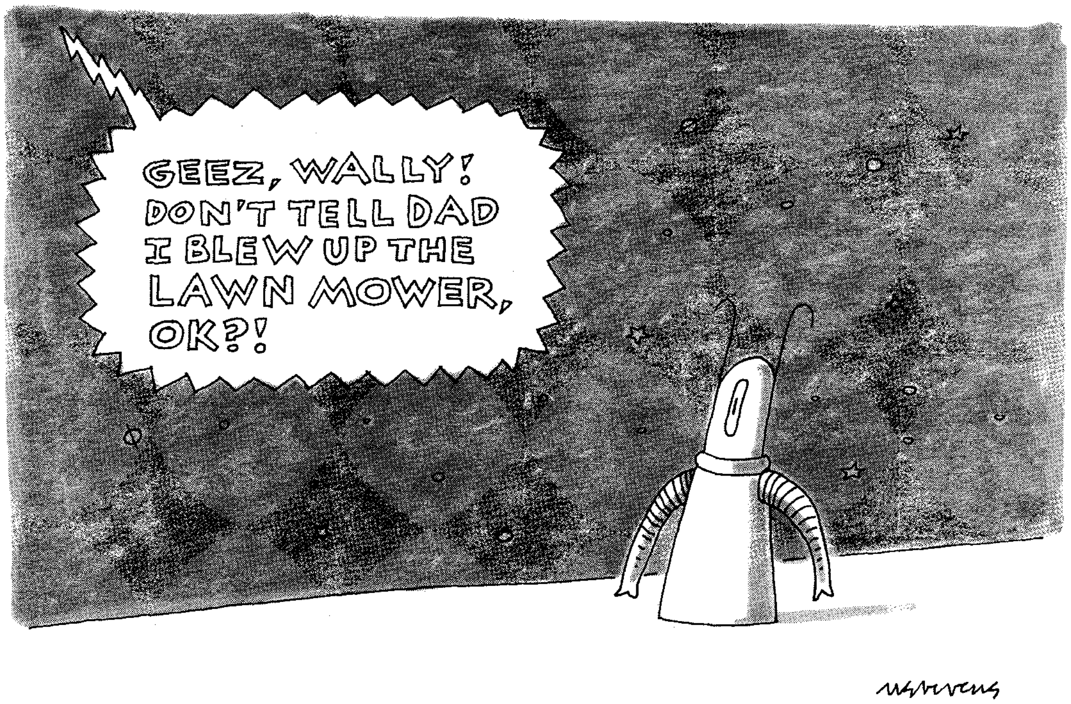
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were useless. Johnny Cross appeared in all of them, to be sure—which didn't signify he was *there*. You might find him but you couldn't get hold of him. Rupert did what he could to conjure up the true Johnny. In a way, he remade him—Puttermesser thought it was a kind of plunder. Rupert was being preposterous and unfair, but she had to acknowledge that he was ingenious. He went after unheard-of combinations and juxtapositions: a letter, then a paragraph from one of the biographies, then again a letter. He threaded in and out of whatever was at hand. And what emerged from all that prestidigitation was Johnny Cross in love—but not with George Eliot.

"Good God," Puttermesser said. "The one thing everybody knows for sure about Johnny Cross is that he loved George Eliot. He adored her! There never *was* anybody else for him. When she died he never married again. You can't just contradict what everybody absolutely *knows*."

But Rupert pressed on with his evidence. It was, he said, right there in Johnny's unnatural behavior in the first weeks after Lewes's funeral. George Eliot had pleaded with him to come and help her with the business matters George Lewes had always taken care of: Johnny was good at money. He arrived carrying Dante's Inferno. George Eliot was in her sitting room rereading the Iliad—in Greek, of course—to take her mind off her sorrow. Johnny said he was hoping to get started on Dante to take his mind off *his* sorrow; he was mourning his mother. The trouble was, he had to read Dante in Carlyle's translation. The Italian he had picked up in Rome, with his mother, wasn't up to snuff. "Oh," George Eliot cried out to Nephew Johnny, "I must read that with you!" —she liked Dante better than accounting. They went at it word by word. She was massively patient. He was painfully attentive—this was his design.

Rupert held up "George Eliot's Life" under the sea-green lamp and chanted: " 'The divine poet took us into a new world. It was a renovation of life.' There, that's Johnny confessing."

"Right! You see?" Puttermesser said. "A renovation of life! He's telling us how he adored her—"

"You're not getting it," Rupert said. "The fellow was infatuated. With Lewes."

"Rupert, that's ridiculous."

"I don't mean what you think. I mean incarnation. He was trying to jump right into Lewes's shoes—whatever Lewes was good at, Johnny was going to do. He was out for that. He was going to be Lewes for her. A reasonable facsimile. The idea was to impress on her that Lewes was still around. Accessible, in a manner of speaking. In another packet of flesh. The face was the face of Johnny, but the soul was the soul of Lewes. *That's* the point."

"Oh, I don't know," Puttermesser said, weakening. It was ridiculous, and it was not.

"And the night readings. He kept a record, just like Lewes. First Dante. Then she took him through Chaucer, Shakespeare, Wordsworth. The basics. He had to sweat it out. All of it right there in her sitting room in the Priory, right smack under a big blown-up photo of Lewes. For all I know he had his bottom in the same chair Lewes used to put *his* bottom in. And doesn't he ask her to play the piano for him? The same music she played for Lewes? Then she turns sixty, and Johnny kisses her hand."

"And then he marries her. George Lewes never did that! You keep ignoring that," Puttermesser said. "Marrying her isn't jumping into George Lewes's shoes!"

"You think she wouldn't have had a big church wedding with Lewes if she'd had a chance to? If the law had allowed it? Look, the minute such a thing gets to be possible—Johnny's definitely single—what does she do? She runs out to buy a trousseau."

Rupert plucked up a book from the stack on Puttermesser's teak desk and wet his thumb. "They're sending letters right and left behind her back. Churning up the gossip. 'George Eliot had been seen at all the fashionable milliners and dressmakers in London. . . . Whatever money and taste could do to make her look not too unsuitable a bride for a man of forty had been done.' And after a quarter of a century of snubbing her for living in sin with Lewes, brother Isaac writes to congratulate her on her marriage to

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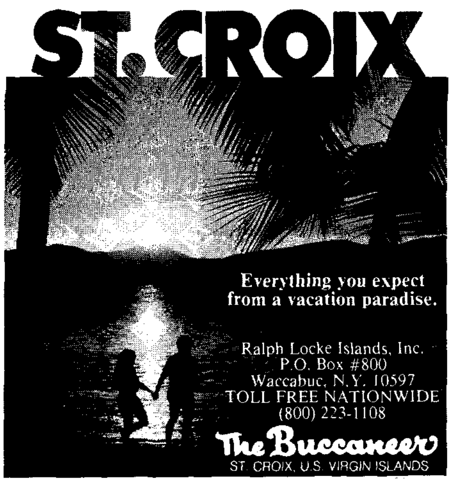

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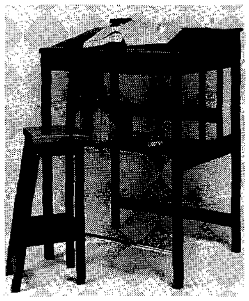

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Johnny! And she's *grateful.* These are conventional folks, Ruthie, believe me. It's Johnny you've got to keep your eye on."

Puttermesser stared. "Why?"

"I'm telling you why. Watch him make himself into a second Lewes."

"*You're* doing that. You're making him into Johnny Cross, Reënactments." Puttermesser drew back. Her lungs felt fat from too much air. "You're making him into a copyist!"

Rupert gave out a paradisal smile. "Isn't that what he had in mind?"

"He was in love! And she was lonely, she was missing connubial love. She'd been happy with Lewes, she wanted to be happy again—" Puttermesser seized the "Letters" and shook out the pages with a ferocity. "Damn it, Rupert, *listen!*

> A great momentous change is taking place in my life—a sort of miracle in which I could never have believed, and under which I still sit amazed. If it alters your conception of me so thoroughly that you must henceforth regard me as a new person, a stranger to you, I shall not take it hardly, for I myself a little while ago should have said this thing could not be.
>
> I am going to be married to Mr. Cross. . . . He has been a devoted friend for years, much loved and trusted by Mr. Lewes, and now that I am alone, he sees his only longed-for happiness in dedicating his life to me. . . . Explanations of these crises, which seem sudden though they are slowly dimly prepared, are impossible. . . . We are going away tomorrow and shall be abroad two or three months.

"And then they went off together. That's how it is," Puttermesser finished. "A pair of married lovers. You can't just go and twist it into something else. You want to hear how she'd been feeling? *Here's* how she'd been feeling!" She was as pitiless as a conqueror. It was Rupert she wanted to conquer—Rupert's plan for Johnny Cross. She thumped a fist on the "Letters" and read out furiously, " 'Blessed are the dead who rest from their labors, and have not to dread a barren, useless survival.' That's why she married Johnny Cross!"

Rupert looked meditative; he looked serious. Puttermesser took him in all over again—he was narrow, and blond, and burnished, and small. He was brushed and orderly. The clear, blank circles of his eyes were needled through by the fierce points of the pupils. They punctuated; they punctured.

"*We* ought to do that," Rupert said. "Not the going away part. The great momentous change—that part."

He *was* serious. It wasn't a snicker, it wasn't a crack tossed off. Puttermesser hated banter and flippancy; she had fled Harvey Morgenbluth's party because of banter and flippancy. Rupert was a Southerner—he wasn't infected by the New York patter. "Like a few other people in the world, he is much better than he seems—a man of heart and conscience wearing a mask of flippancy." This was how George Eliot had once described George Lewes—though not right away. Her first impression was of a miniature fop, gyrating his arms, too talkative, shallow. But Rupert was serious through and through.

"O.K.," Puttermesser said. "Let's do it."

She wasn't sure whether she had at just that moment agreed to marry Rupert Rabeeno.

"Let's not forget the honeymoon," he said.

"O.K.," she said. "The honeymoon. You do it."

She watched him do the honeymoon. He did it fastidiously, with a sort of military instinct for the organization of it—slips of paper to mark the pages, volumes set in consecutive order ready to hand, quotations culled on cards. It was curious how well he had prepared himself. Out of the jumble they drew from every night—maps, letters, journals, biographies, memoirs, pamphlets, books and more books!—he was fashioning something clever, something out of the ordinary. A destiny. Rupert went about doing the honeymoon with the same heat of immanence he had blown into "The Death of Socrates." He read, yelled, sang, beamed. It was all for Johnny Cross—for Rupert's theory of Johnny Cross, and Johnny Cross was only footnote and anticlimax. He wouldn't let her ride over his theory; she hadn't been able to deflect him. Puttermesser was jealous. Rupert had lavished nothing like this on George Lewes. Yet it really *was* happening again, a second round. Puttermesser was obliged to admit to herself the possibility that Rupert might be on the right track. The honeymoon of Johnny Cross and George Eliot was turning out to be purest mimicry of the honeymoon of George Lewes and George Eliot—the honeymoon that couldn't be called a honeymoon because there had never been a wedding.

Rupert did the wedding first. It was

plausible to begin there, at the church at quarter past ten in the morning. Lewes's son, two years younger than Johnny, gave George Eliot away. All of Johnny's relatives came—his sisters, and their husbands, and his cousins, and his cousins' children. After the ceremony the bride and groom went back to the Priory with a pair of solicitors to sign their wills. Then they set out for Dover, to catch the next day's Channel steamer for Calais. In Dover they spent the night at the same hotel where George Eliot and George Lewes had once sojourned. ("When Johnny was still a schoolboy!" Rupert crowed. "The same hotel!") When they reached Calais Johnny noticed how much younger and healthier George Eliot was looking—it was as if she were being renewed by every familiar mile along the old route. ("It *was* the old route," Rupert pointed out.) They were heading for Venice. Johnny took them down to Milan through Grenoble and Mount Cenis, exactly the itinerary Lewes had designed for what George Eliot had called their "deep wedded happiness." A week in Milan, as before; and then Venice.

Venice! "What stillness! What beauty!" George Eliot whispered. (Rupert, reading from George Eliot's journal, was whispering, too.) "Looking out from the high window of our hotel on the Grand Canal, I felt that it was a pity to go to bed. Venice was more beautiful than romances had feigned. And that was the impression that remained and even deepened during our stay of eight days." But that was long ago, with Lewes. Their room was dizzily distant above the glistering water. In the afternoons, the two Georges meandered through the basilica of San Marco, thinking it resplendent but barbaric. In the Scuola di San Rocco they were transfixed by the homely Mary of Tintoretto's "Annunciation." They bought lace and glass and jewelry, and floated around the lagoon in a gondola decked out with colored lanterns. Under the Rialto bridge the gondoliers rested their poles and warbled their lungs out, to bring an echo out of the waves. ("'O *sole mio*," Rupert sang. "Now watch-a John-nee," he sang.) Johnny Cross and George Eliot reached Venice a month after their wedding. It was fragrant early June. Sunlight and speckled cream palaces with ancient cracks running down their walls, and darkling shadows under the bridges—they intended to linger for an indefinite stretch of summer.

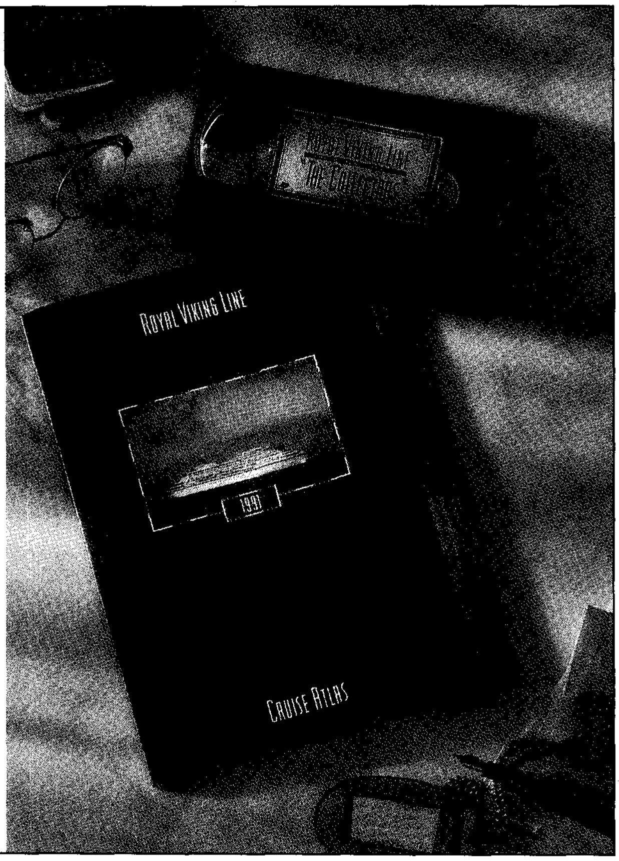
Instead, they quit Venice in the second week.

"Panic," said Rupert. "The honeymoon's secret shock. Its mystery, its enigma."

"All right," Puttermesser said. "Get it over with. You don't have to milk it."

V. THE HONEYMOON

THEY took a hotel directly on the Grand Canal, and had all their meals brought to their room. Much of George Eliot's new wardrobe had come with them in trunks. She was cunningly and handsomely dressed, the elderly erupting collarbone covered by the lightest of wraps, the youthful waist disclosed. Lewes's death had left her ailing and frail; now she was marvellously restored. She was robust, she was tireless. She marched Johnny out to churches and galleries, and lectured him on architecture, painting, sculpture, history. He followed her ardent-



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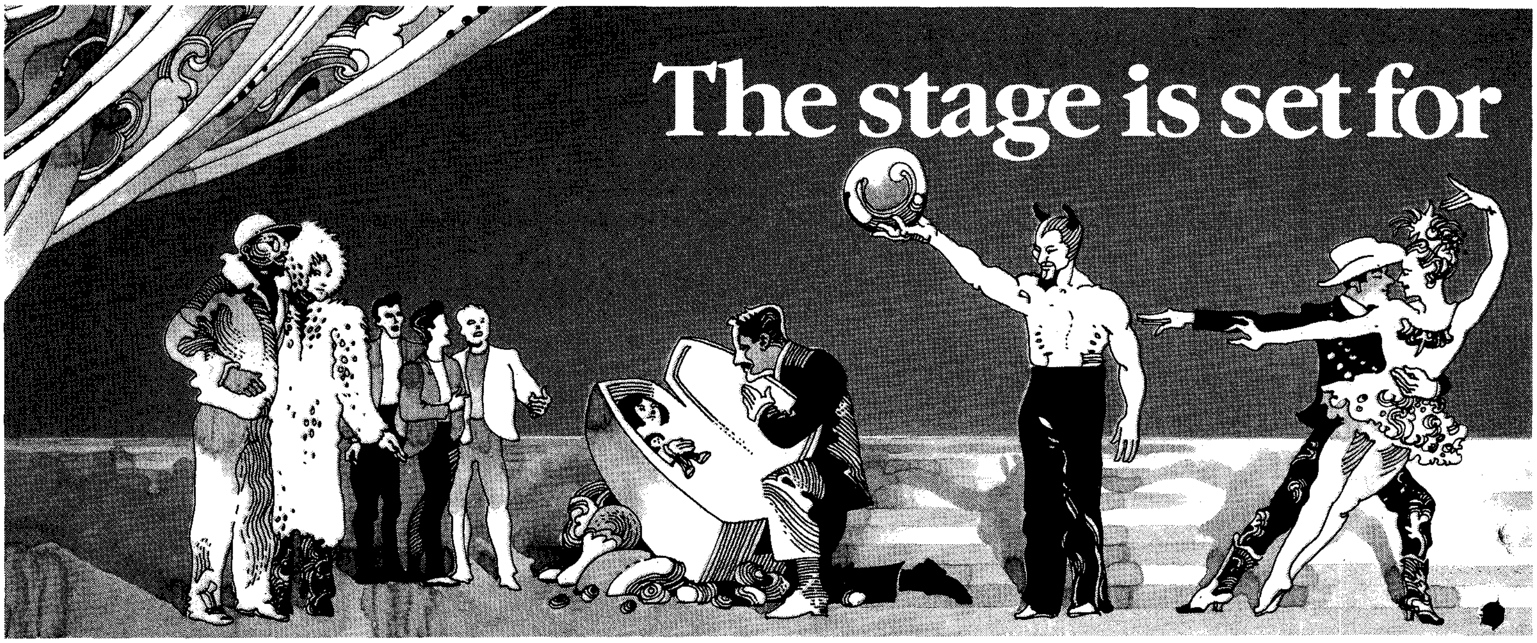
ly. He was proud of her, he was proud of himself. It was achieved. It was all exactly as it had been with Lewes. They stood before the same ugly Tintoretto Madonna and circled the gaudy bowels of San Marco. The June heat thickened; it began to feel tropical, though inside the old stone churches it was cool enough.

But there was something amiss with the air; the air was strange, and bad; there was something amiss with the drains. The view (though not so high up) from the windows of the Hôtel de l'Europe was just what it had been for that earlier pair, the two Georges—the Grand Canal knife-bright in the morning, blood-streaked at sundown, glowering at dusk. The canal below was itself no better than a drain. The air that rose from it was a sick cloud, a pustule of spew, a fume. The open windows gulped it in, especially at night when there was a flicker of wind. At night, the stillness, the beauty: a pity to go to bed. Day after day the pair searched out gonging campaniles, out-of-the-way chapels, glazed portraits of holy babes and saints and bishops and doges, and when the heat ebbed slightly they rode round and round in gondolas, dazed by the blinding white cheeks of the palazzi. The beauty, the beauty!

In the evenings they settled in for supper at the snug oval table in their room. The napery was always blue, though the cloth, sweetened by some herbal soap, was changed daily, and a bowl of flowers, cut every afternoon, was set down on it to obscure the drifting smells of the canal. When the porter came to remove the trays—they ate simply, bread and fish and tea—Johnny and George Eliot were already sunk back into the Inferno. They had returned to Dante because it was clear that Johnny needed to brush up on his Italian now more than ever. Again, she was lavishly attentive, especially to the difficulties of the syntax. She saw a kind of phrenological sturdiness in the coronal arch as his head lowered to the discipline of the page, a dolichocephalic head belonging to a long-boned six-footer. She was glad that he was as different in appearance from Lewes as could be—nothing about him was a reminder. Lewes had been little and vivacious—occasionally too quick—and brilliant and versatile. Johnny wasn't quick, but he was worldly enough; he was a banker who could tell when a man was bluffing. "Thou dost not know," she teased him once, "anything of verbs in Hiphil and Hophal or the history of metaphysics or the position of Kepler in science, but thou knowest best things of another sort, such as belong to the manly heart—secrets of lovingness and rectitude."

His character was solid, well tried, he was steady and affectionate. It hurt her that she was so old, though *he* never thought of it. In Venice, despite all their happiness, she was consumed by it. Nothing could make her young again for Johnny; she knew it whenever she combed through the gray in her hair, or held the mirror to her eyes, with their bruised fleshiness run wild in the caverns beneath. Johnny was already well into balding, but the hair around his ears was dark and bunched with curls. His beard was frizzy. Behind it (his lovely mouth lost in the frizz) there perspired a striving boy with a nervous look. She noticed the look and understood. It was five weeks—almost six—since the wedding. They went to their beds every night as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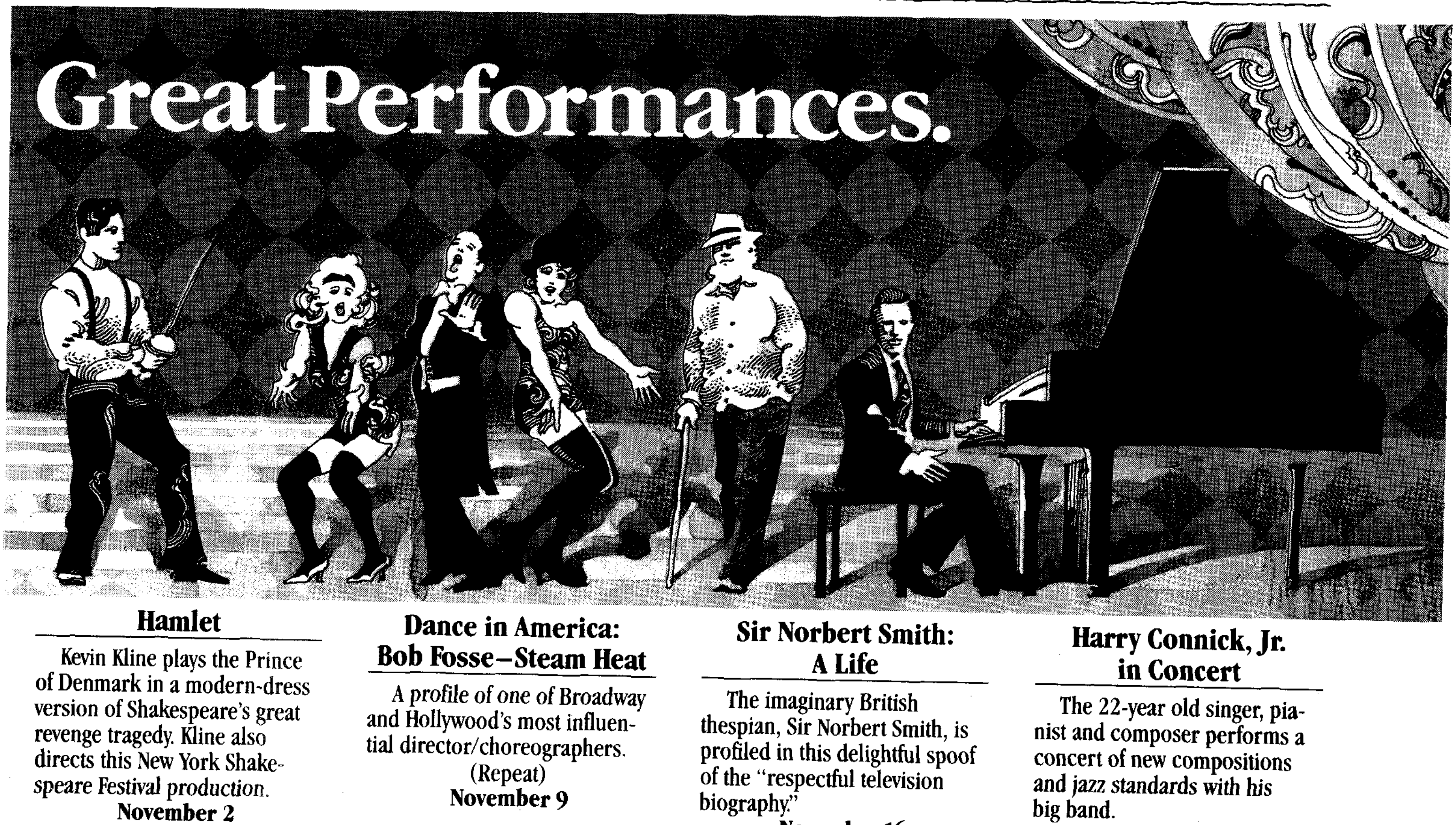
friends—he was her noble companion, her squire, her loyal pupil. How hard he tried! But he faltered over the Dante; she pointed with her finger, and he corrected himself. He was beginning to languish a little. The more she bloomed, the sounder she grew, the more he drooped. They had not yet lain as husband and wife.

It was exercise he was missing. He was, after all, a man of the outdoors, he played tennis and football, and rowed and swam. Venice, all that water, and no rowing—it was only the sunburned gondoliers and their indolent poles, it was only the dreamy floating, it was churches and galleries and pictures and history. Endless, endless history. Endless art. Endless beauty. He wanted some clean air, he wanted something strenuous.

("Pretty strenuous," Rupert intervened, "to keep on walking every minute in Lewes's shoes!")

Johnny said he needed a swim. The Grand Canal was a cesspool; it was right at their doorstep, just under their windows, but you couldn't swim in the canal. The Lido wasn't far. They ought to get over to the Lido, the other side of it, where there was a good sandy beach. On the other side of the Lido they sat sedately on a bench, among ladies and their parasols, and watched the line of tidal waves. Johnny said he longed for a sea bath. The bathhouses were nearby, and he had brought along his swimming costume. He would dash into the sea, have a decent splash, loosen up his limbs, and dash out again; it wouldn't occupy more than a quarter of an hour. She thought the weather wasn't suitable for such a venture: see, she said, raising the pedagogic finger that had so often guided him through the Inferno, you can feel the wind. I'm dying for a bathe, he said, it's the middle of June and hot as Hades. "Though the temperature is agreeable," she argued pleasantly, in that even, courteous contralto cherished by Lewes, and now cherished again by Johnny, "it has not the sort of heat that makes a plunge in cold water"—here she struggled to uncover a just simile—"as good as a drink to the thirsty."

They went back to their hotel. Johnny ordered an elaborate supper of lamb and tomatoes and pudding. The sommelier followed behind the porter with two small ruby bottles. She drank a glassful. Johnny drank several. He seemed roused, alert. She caught the thirst in his eye, and knew it was a shy celebration. The time had come. Over the last days she had observed his inwardness, his delicacy, his brooding. He had stood despondently before the very shapes and pictures that Lewes had looked on years before with so much brio and worshipful wit. Johnny was distracted. She was not surprised when, after the porter returned to clear the table, Johnny wiped his fingers with his blue napkin and declined to take up the Dante. She thought to tempt him with Comte—a diversion—but he turned away. She was discreet. The diffidence between them was natural. Until a month ago he had been a bachelor, doubtless no more celibate than any other handsome young fellow. But unlike herself—she had gone to bed with George Lewes for twenty-five years—he was new to the dignified rituals of conjugal intimacy. She made out some fresh tentativeness in him, a drawing away. It was restraint, it was mindfulness: he was whipping down animal nature until she was ready to



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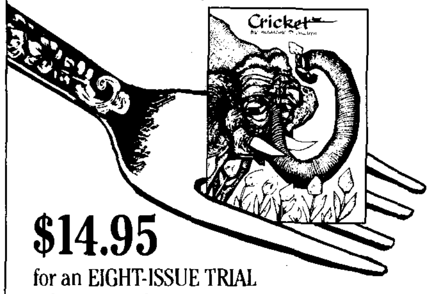

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give him a signal. She was a little frightened that he put the responsibility on her; but also excited. She, who was accustomed to leaning on a husband!

She retired into her dressing closet, a mirrored nook set apart, and chose a nightgown she had never worn before. She shut the door so that he would not see her too soon, and let down her hair. The nightgown feathered her bony shoulders with masses of concealing lace. It all at once struck her that, with her pleasant figure and loosened hair, she had, in the looking glass, the sweetness of a bride of twenty-two: she did not feel old at all.

When she came back to him she was disappointed that he was in his own bed. Nothing was different, it was like other nights. She had imagined he would be loitering at the window, say, listening for her, watching the black spirals the gondoliers' poles lanced into the water. She had imagined that he would wait until she hid herself—her little bride-self!—under her own coverlet, and then, hesitantly, tenderly, silently, he would set his limbs against her limbs at last. Instead, he was a stiff hunch in the other bed. His trousers were folded on a chair. The small wind sent the window curtains grazing over his head.

On second thought she was charmed by this backwardness. She reminded herself that the initiative was hers, and how could it be otherwise? He was reticent, he was a boy. Perhaps she had been mistaken—possibly he had no experience at all. Below, sliding along the Grand Canal, a convoy of gondolas was flinging up laughter and voices and loud singing in an Italian remote from Dante's. Some locals on a lark, or a party of gondoliers and their wild girls. The air, bad as it was, swelled every sound into a roar. Then the line of gondolas passed and she was alone with him in the quiet. "*Bester Mann*," she murmured, and added some syllables from Goethe—Goethe, whom Lewes had so much loved.

She sat on the bed beside him and caressed the circle of his ear. "Dearest, dearest John," she said. He kept his back to her, and did not stir. She lifted the coverlet, and lay down close against him. He had not put on his nightdress; he was still in that morning's shirt. He had discarded his cravat—it was a thick serpent on the floor. She touched her naked toes to the naked bulge of his calf; with one bold arm she embraced

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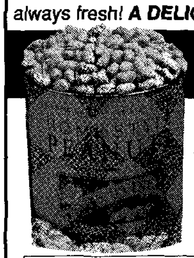

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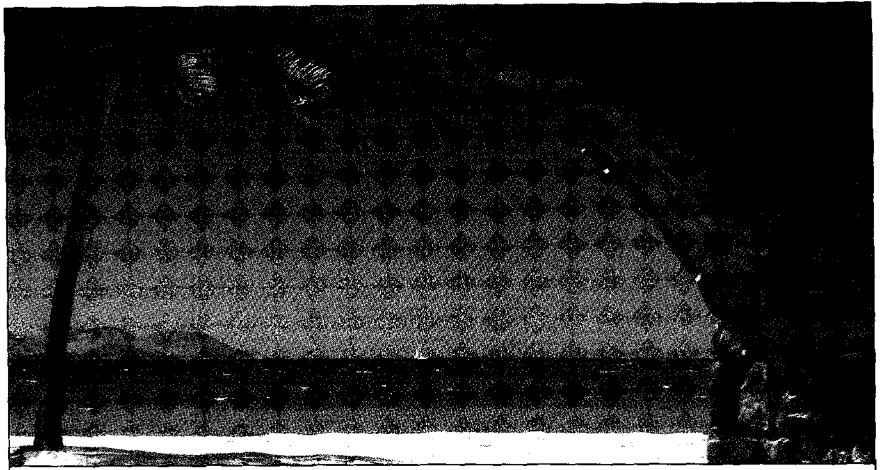
his wide chest. His upper body was hot. The leg was cold. She was right to have discouraged a swim—was he ill? "Johnny, dear," she said. He did not answer. She was alarmed and faintly shamed; she removed her foot from his calf, and put her hand to the thigh of the other leg. It was cold, cold. Despite the trail of wind, the night was warm. It was growing warmer and warmer. The grooves flowing from her nose to the corners of her mouth, an old woman's creases, ran with sudden sweat; her armpits were sweated. She was not doing what he wished. She was too immodest, there was some direction he mutely intended which she could not interpret. "Johnny," she pleaded, "dear boy, are you unwell? Look at me, Johnny, dear, let me see your eyes."

He turned to her then, and showed her his eyes. They were unrecognizable—the rims of the lids as raw and bloody as meat, stretched apart like an animal's freshly slaughtered throat. Only the whites were there—the eyeballs had rolled off under the skin. An old secret shot through her like an intuition: a thing she had forgotten she knew. Johnny had a mad brother who was put away somewhere; Lewes had told her this long ago. Abruptly, the eyeballs fell back into place. He was not normal. He was unwell. The bitter, putrid wind, the drains, the polluted canal, the open window. He was breathing with an urgency; every inhalation seemed hard won. She could not get enough air for herself. They were entombed in a furnace. Down below, the fleet of gondolas was returning, the raucous party from before, or another just as noisy—she heard blasts of laughter, and common street voices, and singing, and this time a tremulous guitar. She was standing now; her brain was shuttling so rapidly that it shook her—there was a doctor in Venice, Dr. Ricchetti, whom English people consulted. She ran to the bellpull on the far wall, a little distance from the windows, to ring for the hall porter.

A tremendous swipe—the scream of a huge bullwhip or instant cyclone—cut through naked space. A projectile of some kind—she had seen the smudge of it fly past her own back. A stone—a ball, a bone—tossed up by some loutish member of the crew below. Straight through the window. But the bed was empty. Johnny was not in it. The curtain was ripped away. The projectile had flown not into but out of the



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window. The projectile was Johnny. She bent over the windowsill and shrieked. His elbows in their shirtsleeves dipped and rose, dipped and rose, like white fins. He was having his swim in the Grand Canal. The gondoliers mocked her cry: "Gianni, Gianni!" They leaped into the night water after him, but he would not be caught. For ten minutes they chased the white fins, and fished poor Johnny out by hooking his collar on one of their poles.

VI. THE MARRIAGE

Puttermesser had always hated that part. It was too ugly. She didn't like to think about it. Everything bright had ended with George Lewes's funeral. The rest was nothing. The rest didn't count. Johnny Cross, diagnosed as having been subject to "acute mental depression" on a single night of his life, came back to normal, never again had even a moment's worth of derangement, and died in 1924 at the age of eighty-four. But George Eliot weakened and failed. Six months after Johnny threw himself out of the window, she was dead.

Rupert remained cheerful. He didn't miss George Eliot; he had never admired her. Puttermesser, too, under Rupert's influence, had begun to withdraw a little. Possibly George Eliot *was* a prig. She shouldn't have kept Johnny from bathing at the Lido; it was preposterous. She knew he was no good at foreign languages—he couldn't master Hebrew, and mixed up *hiphil* and *hophal.* Then why did she terrorize him with Dante? But Rupert was still harping on his idea—Johnny impersonating Lewes. After Venice, Rupert persisted, in the little time left to their marriage, George Eliot and Johnny Cross went back to the *very same house* Johnny had once helped Lewes buy. "The identical four walls!" he said. "Proof! What more do you want?"

Puttermesser was impatient. She was getting sick of Rupert's idea.

"George Lewes didn't jump into the Grand Canal, did he?" She pushed away the last volume of Johnny Cross's biography. "Johnny just couldn't face sex," she accused.

She looked around her bedroom. A flood of disorder. Heaps of those biographies and maps and memoirs and diaries. An engulfing crust on desk and dresser and floor. Miniature skyscrapers on the windowsills. It was enough. She wanted all those books out. Out, out! Back to the Society Library! The only tidy corner was over near her bed, where Rupert had stored several stacks of his postcards, straight as dominoes.

Puttermesser felt routed. It was as if they had come through a riot. Something tumultuous had happened; she was exhausted, as after intoxication or trance. Rupert had made it happen: this shivering precariousness, this tumult. He had cast out George Lewes, bright-souled George Lewes, and hauled Johnny Cross in. Rupert's impersonation of Johnny Cross impersonating Lewes! It was too alive. It jarred, it aroused. All through his telling the honeymoon she fidgeted, she kindled, she smarted. Rupert was a wizard. He made the honeymoon happen under her fingernails, at the root of her spine. She suffered. It was Lewes she wanted, only Lewes. Didn't the two of them—herself and Rupert—put their heads together under the lamp? Didn't they ignite every passage between them? Yet Rupert took Lewes from her and gave her Cross. Done! The honeymoon was done. Ugly, ugly. She hated it. She had always hated the honeymoon. Rupert pressed it under her fingernails; it was a pole piercing her spine.

Rupert said, "I finished up that Frick thing. Vegetarian tomato, all right?"

Puttermesser said she wasn't hungry for soup.

"Finished up yesterday. A nice Dutch landscape. I have to see Harvey about it when it dries—I'll ask him then. What's wrong with vegetarian tomato?"

"Ask Harvey what?"

"Well, it takes two witnesses. I'll get Harvey next time I'm up there. You figure out who else."

Puttermesser concentrated. "Two witnesses?"

"That's how many you need to get married."

So he meant it. She saw that he meant it. He had been serious about it before. He was serious about it now. Lewes! Lewes, after all! Lewes had inspired him to it. Lewes had seduced him to it. Johnny Cross had got in the way, but the victory belonged to Lewes. Ideal friendship!

"I don't know anybody to ask," Puttermesser said.

"You know a lot of people."

"Not lately. Not this year."

"What about all those politicos in the Municipal Building?"

"I don't work there anymore and I'll never work there again. It was stupid to think I'd ever go back." She reflected on the webwork of her life. Her aunts and uncles were dead. The cousins, once a numerous and jolly gang, were scattered and aging. Half of them had been swallowed up by California—San Diego, Berkeley, Santa Monica, Lake Tahoe. By now most were senior citizens. And the receding gallery of all her old society: there they were, page after page in her little Woolworth address book, those ghosts of classrooms past and half-remembered offices, the detritus of her ascent to fifty-plus. Superannuated fellowship of gossip. Movie companions of yesteryear. They were all distant: either they were wrangling toward divorce, or they lived for their jobs, or they were tanning in the Caribbean, or they were absorbed in their children and their children's babies. Their children: the great genetic tide—the torrent—that separates those with offspring from those without. Three or four of Puttermesser's friends had already died in the lottery of early disease. In the roster of the living, there was not a soul she might want as witness to her wedding. Everyone was obsolete. She was clearing the way. A new life. Clean, pristine.

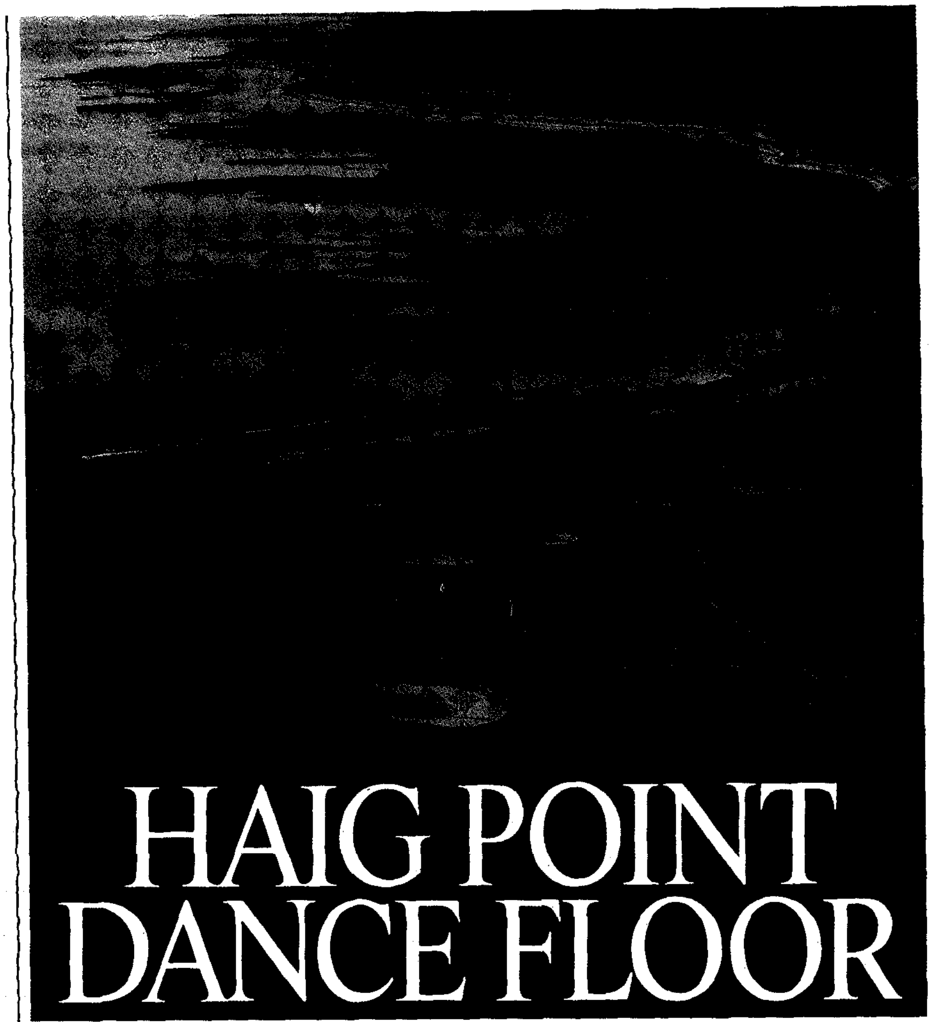
"But no, Rupert, you're the only one. It's only you. I don't have anybody else."

"I'm in lieu of the world," Rupert said.

She looked to see the mask of flippancy. But there was none.

"Oh, no," she protested, and let his tidy head come into her arms. "You're not in lieu of anything."

Late on a Monday afternoon they took the subway all the way downtown to the Brooklyn Bridge station and went up to the second floor of the Municipal Building. The familiar corridors were wide, battered, gritty; it was as if the walls repelled light. To Puttermesser's surprise, the Marriage License Bureau was no longer there. It had crossed the road to Chambers Street and settled in a former bank the color of an elderly cat's scarred hide. On their way out, Puttermesser surveyed her old territory; inside what had been her own office only months ago, motes hung languidly on smuggled beads of illicit sun. Somewhere a toilet was running. It was relieving that no



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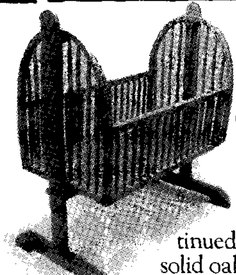

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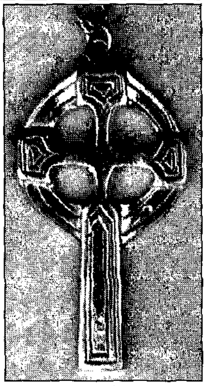

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one recognized her. She was now among the generations of the politically vanished. Estrangement narrowed her throat; her eyes stung in the dimness. She marvelled that she had once disgorged her lawyerly brain into this moribund organism, with its system of secretaries, clerks, assistants, its iron arteries shuffling with underlings.

On the trip back on the No. 6 line in the rush-hour crush, enveloped by the tunnel's grinding thunder, Puttermesser found herself smashed up against Rupert. The car swung like a cradle inside a concussion. Sunk into Rupert's warm shoulder, she felt herself without a past.

"A tomb," she told Rupert. "That place is a tomb."

"What?" he yelled out of the thunder.

"I'm thinking," Puttermesser shouted back, "that my savings are going down. I'll have to start again somewhere pretty soon. You, too, Rupert."

"I don't *have* any savings."

The car screeched around a turn. "You can't do postcards forever," Puttermesser yelled. "Your talent's too big."

"It's just the right size to fit on a postcard. You should see the nice job Harvey's doing on the Frick thing," he yelled back. "Harvey says O.K., did I tell you? About being a witness. And he knows two rabbis—one on the West Side who married him the first time, and one on the East Side who married him the second time. On Second Avenue, in fact," Rupert hollered.

"You should give up the postcards. You should give up Harvey."

The train, arriving at a station, came to a violent stop. Puttermesser was catapulted away. A river of bodies rushed for the door. A forest of bodies sprang up between herself and Rupert.

"All right," Rupert mouthed from across the car. "I'll give up Harvey."

The wedding day was Wednesday—the rabbi on Second Avenue was free that night—and by then they had found the second witness.

Puttermesser said, "There used to be a thumping sound, remember? No, it was before you got here."

"Thumping sound?"

"Well, it's gone. It's been gone for weeks. She's quit doing it. I bet she wouldn't refuse us. She's the one," Puttermesser said. "She's right next *door*."

The math teacher explained that she had folded up her exercise mat for good. It was hard work, and didn't do the job. Anyhow, it was too lonely. She was enrolled nowadays in one of those new health clubs for singles over on Madison. Her name was Raya Lieberman; she wouldn't at all mind, she said, helping out at a wedding, as long as it was after school. It was true she had Math Club on Wednesdays, but she was perfectly happy to skip it for once. "I've got as good an extracurric supervisory attendance record as anybody, believe me," she assured Puttermesser. "The best, considering what comes down the pike these days."

The rabbi's study was on East Ninetieth, in his apartment. On the telephone he had inquired whether a modest ceremony at 9:30 P.M. in his study at home would be satisfactory, given that it was such a small wedding party and given also—he had a homiletic inflection—that the congregational sanctuary couldn't in any case be secured in the evening on such short notice; and Rupert had agreed. It was

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beginning to snow again, so the four of them went by taxi—the bride and groom, and the two witnesses. Puttermesser sat in the back seat between the math teacher and Harvey Morgenbluth. Rupert, straight-spined in his stately hat and capelike raincoat, was up front with the driver. Puttermesser had on her best black patent-leather high heels. Rupert and the two witnesses were all wearing their galoshes.

"You ever done a thing like this before?" Harvey Morgenbluth asked Raya Lieberman, leaning across Puttermesser.

"I've been a bride, but not a witness. You?"

"Never done anything like this. How many times?"

"How many times what?"

"How many times you been married?" Harvey Morgenbluth urged across Puttermesser's lap.

"Once."

"With me, it's twice. This is my second rabbi we're on the way to."

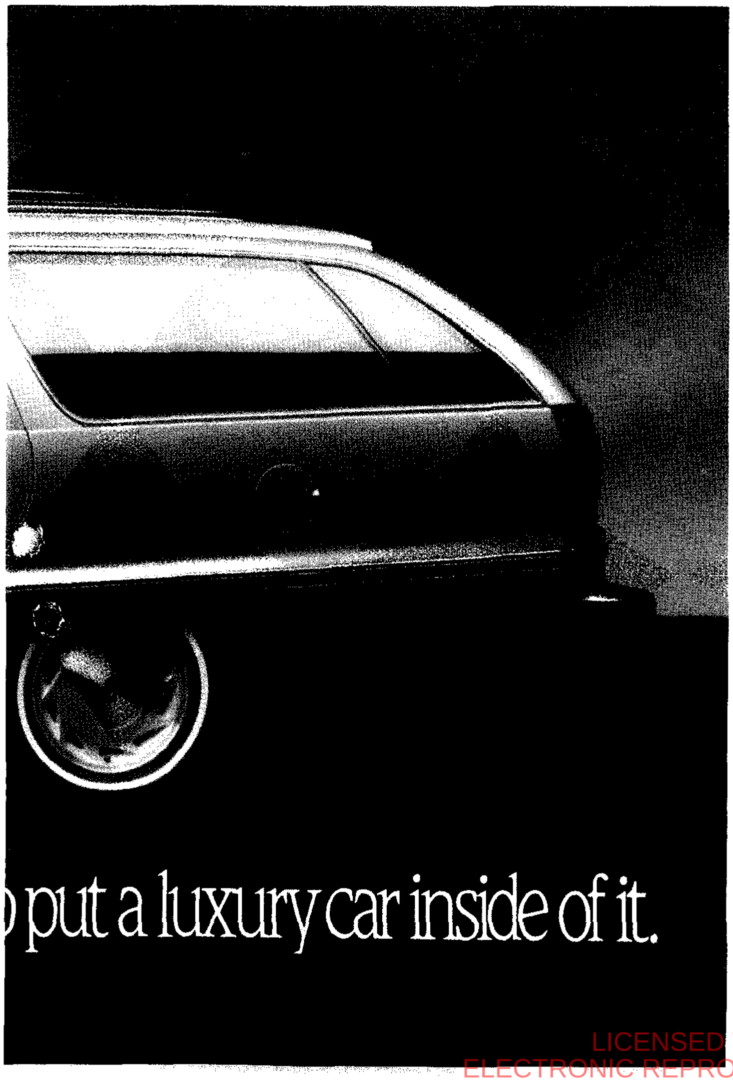
It surprised Puttermesser that Harvey Morgenbluth was a familiar apparition. She was habituated to his camel's walk and translucent, flushed ears and phlegmatic, oxlike forehead, well scored by parallel clef lines. It was not unusual for her to run into the math teacher on the way to the incinerator closet or the elevator, but now it dawned on Puttermesser that the flustered-seeming man whom she had often noticed weaving among the shabby old sofas in the lobby, hauling big, square cartons, was Harvey Morgenbluth. Occasionally he pushed them on a dolly. No doubt some of those cartons contained Rupert's postcards. A sourness rose in her. Four inches by six; that was their size. That Frick landscape, a spacious van Ruysdael—a bridge, the gnarled roots of a tree, dark clouds, strange light (dawn or dusk or afternoon before rain), a hunter, a fisherman, a long road, deep vista, two riders, one mounted, the other standing by, red cloak thrown over a shoulder (Rupert loved cloaks, capes, togas), black horse crosswise in the road, blocking it, blacking it, dotting it, swallowing up sky and earth—all that mastery shrunk to four inches by six. Rupert on the side of diminishment, how could it be? At the Met, that first time, hadn't she seen in him voluminous will, the will to be proxy for the punctilious windings and reverberations of huge precursors? Was Rupert with all his amplitude always to be reduced via the technologies of Harvey Morgenbluth? He had promised on the subway to give up Harvey Morgenbluth. Rupert had never explained why a reënactment had to be a dwindling. If it was a dwindling, how could you call it a reënactment?

Puttermesser reminded herself that it was normal to be jittery on the way to one's wedding. Who knew what unhappy divinations Rupert was hurling at her in the front seat, from under his cloak?

Harvey Morgenbluth, still heavy across Puttermesser's knees, was trying to find out from the math teacher if she was available for dinner and a movie next Sunday. "We could go over to the Baronet on Third, or the Beekman on Second. Or look, I've got 'Gone with the Wind' on tape, how about it?"

Puttermesser said briskly, "Don't you do those Sunday parties anymore?"

"Winding down, haven't had one in a bunch of weeks. The kids drove



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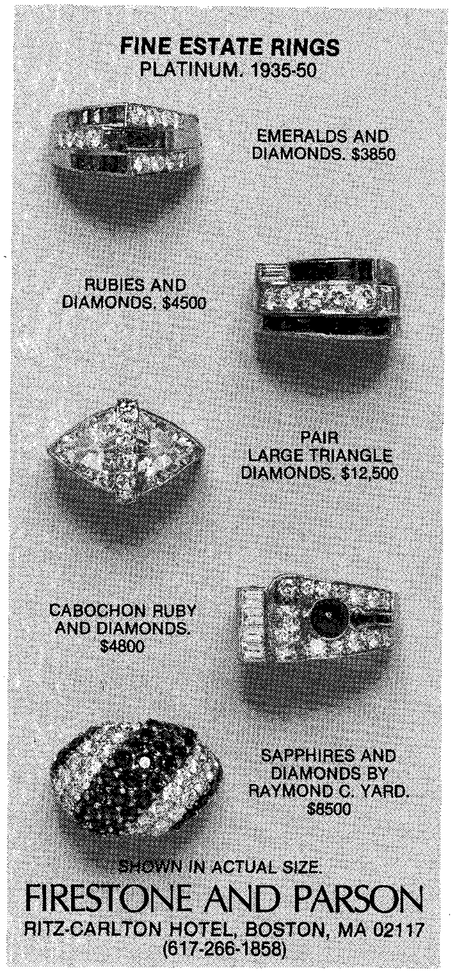

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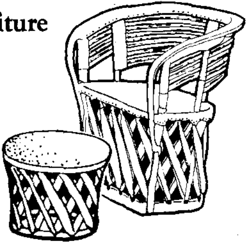

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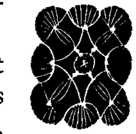
everybody crazy. And you couldn't get a type like Rupert—Rupert's a pretty open guy, but he wasn't interested. Nobody would open up."

Raya Lieberman said, "Nobody opens up nowadays. It's hard for people to be in touch. Everyone's a lonesome atom."

Harvey Morgenbluth whistled. "A lonesome atom, my God. You *said* it." He turned to Puttermesser. His flushed ears were all attention. "By the way, how's the roach problem? You really want to beat 'em, try sodium fluoride around the pipes."

The rabbi's name was Stewart Sonnenfeld. He introduced his wife, Jill, and his teen-age son, Seth, who was at that moment writing a report on Chaucer's "Prologue" for his English class. The four poles of the wedding canopy were held up by Harvey Morgenbluth, Raya Lieberman, Jill Sonnenfeld, and Seth Sonnenfeld. Puttermesser had retrieved her mother's wedding ring from an old felt wallet she kept inside an empty plastic margarine container at the back of the vegetable bin in the refrigerator to foil a burglar. The rabbi had cautioned Rupert to bring along his own wineglass for the ceremony, so that morning Puttermesser had hurried into Woolworth to buy one. Jill Sonnenfeld wrapped it in a paper napkin inside a paper bag, and Rupert stamped on it with his galosh. It exploded with a gratifying convulsion. In Puttermesser's apartment afterward Harvey Morgenbluth and Raya Lieberman each drank a Styrofoam cup of champagne (Harvey's present) and ate a piece of wedding cake—Puttermesser made do with an Entenmann's chocolate layer from the supermarket on Third—and then the two witnesses went off together.



"Into the night," Puttermesser said. "They've gone off into the night, imagine that. Maybe it'll take."

Rupert was poking in the corner closet where he kept his equipment; he was dragging out his satchel. "Maybe into the night," Rupert said. "More likely upstairs to 6-C."

"*We* took," Puttermesser said.

Her heart—her fleshly heart—was curled around itself, like a spiralled loaf of hot, new bread. Inside the cavity that rocked it, this good bread was swelling. Puttermesser waited for Rupert's head to come into her arms, against her heart's loaf. She waited for his voice, his dark reading voice, with its sharp click that could cut her with happiness, like a beak. The living, plain, painful flesh. Sometimes, for all the tumult of his history (he had handed over every winding of his life to her, he kept nothing back), he seemed new-made—as if she had ejected him from a secret spectral egg lodged in her frontal lobe, or under her tongue where the sour saliva gave birth to desire. He was her own shadow and fingerprint. She had painted him on her retina in her sleep. She felt him to be the smothered croak in her throat, a phlegm of chaos burst out of her lung. He had lived too long in her nerves, and her nerves were all wired to the transcendent. Desire, desire! She and Rupert—both of them—were too tentative.

He had pulled out his easel, and left it on the floor with the satchel. He crossed the living room to stand at the window. A hard wind hit the glass. There he was, mooning down at the snowy street below; she wondered if he was looking to see whether Harvey Morgenbluth and Raya Lieberman had really gone off into the night. The loaf in the middle of her chest ballooned; it grew and grew. Jealousy. Rupert's head struck her as still another loaf, all brightly honeyed against the snow-streaked panes. He had been born into the world two decades after her own birth. A long, long meadow, all grassy-green, stretched before him. Under his mustache the two points of his mouth were as elastic as a child's.

She saw that he was dusted over with gloom. He unbuckled one of his galoshes. He seemed indecisive about the other, but he shook it free. The race was behind them, the dream was dreamed. They had arrived at arrival. All wedding nights taste of letdown.

Puttermesser took off her black patent-leather high heels. They had walked in the snow only a little—out of the taxi, into the lobby—but her feet were still damp. She shivered from the feet up. She went into the bedroom to fetch her furry winter slippers. The dresser mirror arrested, fleetingly, the figure of a woman. How quickly that woman fled!

When she came back into the living room, Rupert was wearing his galoshes again. He was wearing his capelike raincoat and his stately hat. He had his folded-up easel under one arm and his satchel in his hand.

There was something in his face she recognized. An indifference had seeped into the gloom. It was as if she had turned invisible. It was as if he did not recognize her: *that* was what she recognized. A snub—almost a snub. His face hurt her. His youth hurt her.

"Rupert," she said. "What are you doing, Rupert?"

"I can't stay."

"You have to."

"I can't. I can't, Ruth. I can't stay."

"Rupert, take off your coat. Please. Rupert, please."

"No," he said. It was not indifference. It was a burning. He was inside a furnace; he was speaking out of a furnace.

Puttermesser called after him, "Rupert! What are you *doing*?"

"I can't stay."

In the little vestibule he set down his satchel and aimed the easel directly in front of him, clutching it like a burning beam; like a spear. He raised it high and plummeted after it back into the living room. He was running for the window. Puttermesser feared he would fling his lance straight through the glass. But he stopped. He put down the easel and with both hands lifted the window wide. A shock of wind knocked over the stack of Styrofoam cups on the sill. The snow flew in, wet as a waterfall.

"Rupert, Rupert," Puttermesser pleaded. "Take off your coat. Shut the window. For God's sake, shut the window!"

He gave her his whole look then. She was falling into the tiny black holes at the center of his clean, powerful eyes. She was falling and falling, but instead of vertigo or delirium or disorder, there was only the candor of her own intelligence. She understood that he was altogether sane, altogether calculating, and as jubilant as a mathematician in the act of confirming an equation.

He picked up his things and walked out the door.

At the open window, hanging over the sill to catch sight of him dwindling in the street, Puttermesser squinted into the snow. It was pointless to call down to him as George Eliot had called down into the Grand Canal, but anyhow she called and called; the snow blew into her mouth. It was starting to stick to her hair. She leaned into the wetness until her hair was all white with snow.

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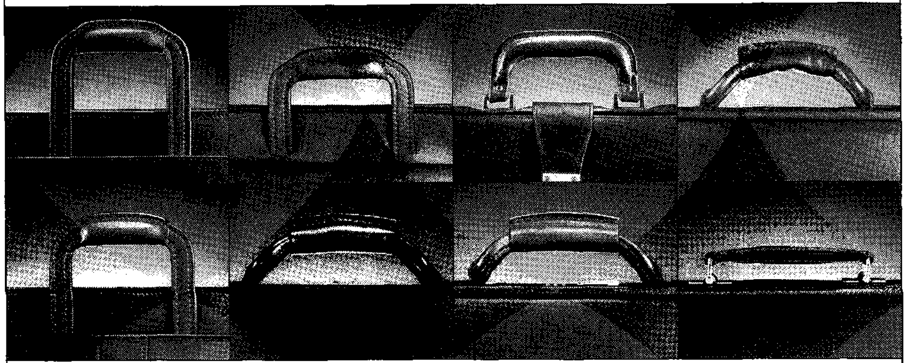

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PROFILES

BELLS AND WHISTLES

A FEW months ago, a friend I was talking with began to tell me about a friend of his named Gary Isaacs, who was working at the downtown headquarters of one of the city's top investment houses as an executive in the division monitoring the savings-and-loan crisis. Though Isaacs was just thirty-two years old, my friend recounted, he had previously worked on the Street in several other capacities as well, and before that he'd had a notably successful career in an entirely different field; what's more, it seemed he was about to quit this one, too, and to head off in yet another direction. When I asked my friend what the previous career had been, and, for that matter, what the new one was going to be, he replied that it would be far more entertaining for me to hear the whole story from the man himself, and before I knew it he was on the phone arranging an appointment, which is how, a few days later, I came to find myself in the sleek elevator of one of downtown's better-known headquarters buildings zooming up toward I didn't have the faintest idea what.

Getting off at the pre-agreed floor, I entered a granite-lined vestibule decorated with a large chrome-plated sign identifying the particular activity of this division of the firm: "CAPITAL FUNDING." I went over to the receptionist and asked for Mr. Isaacs. A few moments later, a young man in a gray suit and glasses emerged through one of those buzz-locked glass doors and introduced himself as Gary Isaacs. Trim but athletically solid, he was clean-shaven, with a high forehead and short-cropped curly dark-blond hair. He seemed a bit shy as he guided me back through a warren of cubicles—a suit in every one—to his office, a good-sized room with a glass wall facing out upon all the cubicles. A computer console sat atop his desk, and stacks of papers and books were piled all about. A well-used whiteboard for writing on occupied part of one wall, and, beyond the desk, a large window afforded a wide view of the buildings opposite (floor upon floor of similar windows, similar offices, similar cubicles). As I took a seat facing his desk, he almost self-effacingly handed me a card, which identified him as "Vice President, Primary Market Group, Financial Strategies Group." There are no doubt dozens of such vice-presidents in this company, but I nevertheless found it somewhat disconcerting to be sitting opposite one so young.

"I guess I should begin by telling you a little about my background," Isaacs said, without any prompting. "I got my college degrees from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where I majored in mechanical engineering." Later, in occasional asides, he provided me with a few facts about his earlier life—he was born in Brooklyn, in 1958, and moved, with his family, to Colonia, New Jersey, at age five; his father has run a series of Midas franchises—but he seemed to feel that his life proper had started at M.I.T.

"I did my principal undergraduate-thesis work in the Fluid Mechanics Lab, investigating the fluid dynamics of collapsible structures," Isaacs went on. "Several of us were working on variations of the same problem, trying to model the flow of fluids within the human body—in particular, the flow of blood through the veins in people's legs. One application we were working toward had to do with deep-vein thrombosis, a situation where the blood is flowing too sluggishly through the veins deep inside a person's leg. The question was how to treat this during surgery: whether through a pressure cuff or by massage, and with what sorts of pressure—sudden? gradual? pulsed?—to avoid having the veins collapse almost completely under the pressure, as, mysteriously, they were sometimes given to doing: that sort of thing. And, actually, it proved to be an interesting, complicated problem.

"Ordinarily, when you study fluid dynamics you start out by studying flow in open channels, say, or in a system of glass tubes and containment vessels. You learn about turbulence, eddy currents, secondary flows, how different sorts of fluids circulate around different sorts of objects in a channel." He went to his whiteboard and began scrawling a set of equations, and in no time he had lost me. "But in all those cases the geometry is fixed, the shape of the channel is static, it's only the fluid that's moving. Whereas the thing about blood vessels is that the structure itself is malleable, so that the variables start compounding very quickly. As you begin to apply pressure to the outside of the tube, the geometry naturally changes, and then, naturally, so does the flow. And here's where things really get interesting: the changing flow ends up affecting the pressure gradients on the inside walls of the tube such that it starts to collapse *from the inside.* A sort of feedback effect gets started." He quickly charted a series of cross-sections on the whiteboard, showing how a circular tube initially flattened in the middle, leaving two tiny channels still open on either side, and how, eventually, they likewise flattened out almost completely.

"Our group was going at this problem in all sorts of different ways," Isaacs said. "Some people were constructing pure mathematical models on the computer, and others were building actual physical models, with varying levels of sophistication. I myself constructed a relatively primitive device. And then each day one of us had to volunteer his or her own leg for various experiments. As I say, it was an interesting lab."

Isaacs completed his undergraduate thesis by the end of his junior year at M.I.T. In the months thereafter, he flirted with the idea of becoming an automotive engineer at Ford, and with some other ideas as well, which he said he would tell me about later, but in the end he decided to stay on at M.I.T. for a year and a half to earn a master's degree.

At that point—in February of 1979—Isaacs transferred to the Vehicle Dynamics Lab, where a team of researchers was working on problems relating to rail vehicles travelling across elevated concrete guideways—monorails, urban-transit systems—as seen from all sorts of vantages: aerodynamics, suspension design, materials, guidance and propulsion. His specific project concerned a somewhat disconcerting feature of all standard concrete spans: their tendency to bow in the middle as heavy train cars roll across them—to bend (in the case of an eighty-foot span) by as much as six inches and then spring back with a shudder that under certain conditions (the train moving at certain speeds, the individual cars being of a certain weight) can cause the second car to accentuate the vibration, the third to accentuate it even more, and so on, until, as Isaacs put it, "the folks sitting in the last car would really be having something to think about." Isaacs' task was to analyze the mathematics of the problem—to model it, and predict the behavior of spans of all sizes, and hence be able to come up with some way of compensating for it—and it turned out that the mathematics involved was immensely complicated.

"For a long time, I was really stumped," Isaacs said. "For starters, I spent months in the library, burrowing through all the literature on concrete. Concrete is a subject on which there are more journals, books, digests, and monographs than you could possibly imagine. There must be easily twenty or thirty regular periodicals devoted exclusively to concrete—*Cement and Concrete Research*, *Concrete International*, and so forth. It's very interesting stuff, concrete is—you know, great compression, lousy in tension, all that sort of thing."

I must have looked baffled. "That means you can push it but you can't pull on it," he explained. "It's like water. Anyway, my breakthrough came . . ." Back he went to the whiteboard. Quickly erasing all the blood-vessel imagery, he scrawled out a new sequence of cross-sections and equations, one cascading into the next, all impenetrable to me. By the time he had covered the entire whiteboard, finally arriving at the solution, he was clearly pleased, but I was still lost.

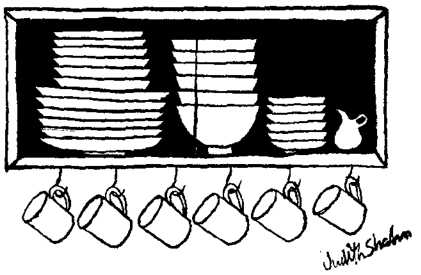
"So what happened to the trains?" I asked lamely. "What happened to those people in the last car?"

"Actually, we didn't end up recommending doing anything to either the cars or the spans," Isaacs replied. "They just had to jimmy the suspension coils."

SOME data came flying across Isaacs' computer monitor, and he excused himself for a moment, went back to his desk, tapped a few keys, peered into the numbers quizzically, reached for a nearby volume, leafed through a few pages, tapped a few more keys, nodded in satisfaction, and returned his attention to me.

"So, anyway, once I'd completed my master's I decided I wanted to work somewhere at the cutting edge of technology. In August of 1980, I took a job in California, with TRW's Defense and Space Systems Group. I mean, just the address of the place was enough to snare me: One Space Park, Redondo Beach. What more could I ask for?

"One of my first jobs there was in the Integration and Test Division—that is, testing already built spacecraft, prior to their delivery for launch. It was an interesting place to work, because you were presented with a lot of constraints. Everything had been designed, tooled, built, and put together long before you even saw the thing. There were elaborate computer models of how the thing was supposed to work, but now there it was, sitting in the High Bay, and it was your job to see if it really did work that way—and, if it didn't, to figure out some way to make it work.



"The testing division had all kinds of subsections, with different groups testing everything from the satellite's telemetry to its capacity for withstanding the sheer vibrations of launch. I first worked with the team that tested the attitude-control system of various satellites; that is, the system that helps the craft to determine where it is and in which direction it's pointing, in relation to where it wants to be and how it wants to be pointing, and then makes it possible for it to get from the one to the other by way of firing miniature steering thrusters tucked away on board. The satellite I worked on for almost my entire first year there happened to be the original TDRS, the Tracking and Data Relay Satellite—at that time the world's biggest and most sophisticated communications satellite. It was scheduled to be the first commercial payload delivered into orbit by the space shuttle a few years down the line."

Isaacs pulled out a glossy pamphlet that TRW had apparently put together in those days to celebrate its then imminent TDRS triumph. The cover featured a photograph of the satellite, seen from above, in the Redondo Beach facility's testing hangar—a tall, sleek object folded in upon itself, the way it would later be tucked into the space shuttle's cargo bay. Standing on end, it resembled a modernist hexagonal flowerpot with two gaudy cactuslike protrusions emerging from its top, the whole thing surrounded by a bevy of intent Lilliputian creatures garbed in white smocks. Inside, the brochure featured an artist's rendition of what the satellite would look like once it had been unfurled in space and parked in its geosynchronous orbit, twenty-two thousand miles above the equator: a huge array of gleaming solar panels, diaphanous antennas, delicately gimballed metal dishes, sprockets and cannisters and pods.

The satellite was going to serve several functions, Isaacs told me. Most important, when it was joined by a second, identical satellite, parked in a similar stationary orbit on the other side of the globe, the two would constitute a nearly continuous integrated system for tracking the space shuttle and other sorts of satellites orbiting below,

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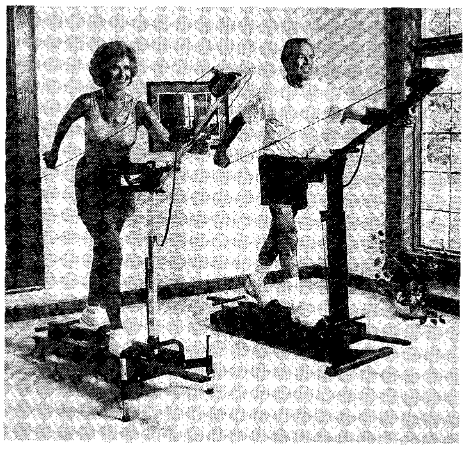

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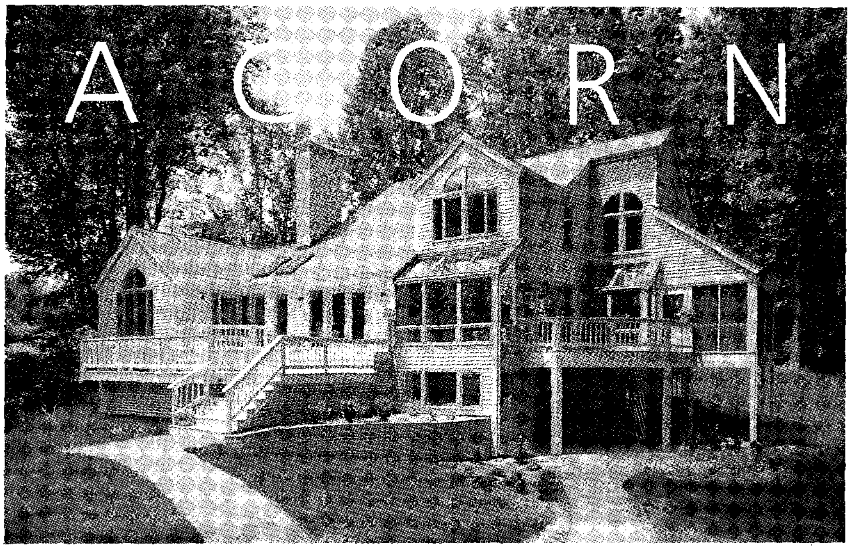

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and for relaying telemetry for those satellites to and from a single ground station, at White Sands, New Mexico, thereby rendering superfluous the dozens of other ground tracking stations scattered all about the world—often in strategically inconvenient spots—whose existence had previously been required in order to provide much less detailed coverage.

"So you can imagine the importance of precise positioning, precise attitude control, with a satellite like that," Isaacs continued. "And testing for that was our responsibility. We set up an elaborate version of what's called a fixed-base test, which is to say that naturally the satellite wasn't actually going to be flying around there in the hangar, floating in space; rather, it would be affixed to a stable base, and we were just going to surround it with dozens of computers, hooked into it by way of scores of cables, through which we were going to fool its on-board computers into believing, for example, that the sun was positioned at such-and-such an angle, the horizon was over here, and so forth—all in an environment simulation, as the procedure was called. We'd see whether the satellite could figure out where it was and what it was doing—its roll, pitch, and yaw angles—and we'd test its capacity for receiving instructions on how to adjust its position, and its ability to act on those instructions. Of course, its on-board computers weren't actually hooked up to its steering thrusters, there in the middle of the High Bay—or, rather, fuel wasn't actually being fed to the thrusters; the thruster valves just opened and closed ineffectually. So we had other computers, whose job it was to interpret the instructions the on-board computer was sending to the thrusters to make sure they were correct—and then to feed back information to the satellite regarding how such a firing would have affected its attitude.

"It was an incredibly intricate setup, and things were continually going wrong. We'd stand around for days scratching our heads, trying to figure out why an indicator on one of our monitors wasn't on. It could have been that somebody had kicked one of the cables, or maybe one of the pins in a connector had got bent, or the board in back of one of the computers might have come loose, or maybe a chip in the spacecraft had been manufactured incorrectly, or correctly but to incorrect specifications, or else maybe the software had been written wrong—the satellite's own software or else the test's—or maybe the indicator wasn't *supposed* to be on in the first place and somebody had just mistakenly said it was.

"And everything was further complicated by the fact that all the commands going up and the telemetry coming back were codified. You couldn't just type in an instruction to the satellite like 'Now move from A to B.' There's a certain language the satellite understands—or, rather, different component systems understand different languages. Some receive their instructions in binary format, some in octal, base eight, and some even in hexidecimal, base sixteen. You've got these different codes interacting within the software, and, to compound things, all the numerical information is scaled, because there's only so much bit space, so you've got numbers being sent up in hundredths and thousandths or ten-thousandths or hundred-thousandths, each number sent up with its scaling factor. . . . And meanwhile you're trying to find the maybe one digit in the midst of this whole stream that's maybe one digit off. It can become like the world's biggest headache.

"So I was doing that sort of thing, and then, in addition, I was doing some of the more mundane housekeeping tasks—for example, preparing a section of the ground-station operator's manual for the so-called change-of-velocity maneuver that the spacecraft would be expected to perform several times a year once it was deployed. Here the problem was that, though the spacecraft would be parked in a stationary geosynchronous orbit at a particular place, it was going to have a tendency to drift to one or the other of two stable nodes, as they were called, within its orbit, where, for various reasons, it would, so to speak, want to be."

Isaacs got up and started to walk over to the whiteboard.

"Never mind," I said. "I believe you."

"Anyway," he continued, sitting down at his desk again, "we were going to correct for that by performing a 'station-keeping,' or change-of-velocity, maneuver: firing the spacecraft's miniature rockets in such a way as to nudge it back to its original position—in fact, a little past its original position, so that when it began drifting again it might take a little longer before we had to repeat the whole thing. That was the idea, and the other guys in the project knew the theoretical stuff: 'Yeah, sure, you can fire two delta-v thrusters *x* number of times over the life of the spacecraft, and we'll budget for fuel accordingly.' But it was my job to actually figure it all out and to write up the sequence of commands the ground-control people would be beaming up to the satellite, over a period of hours, in all those different codes, each time they had to do the thing. It ran many, many pages, but I did it, and at the time I didn't give it a second thought."

Isaacs went on to tell me that by 1982 he had moved on to perform "end to end" system tests on other satellites —tests that were "sort of like the world's most elaborate video games." These tests integrated all the components of a given satellite—components that had previously been tested separately but never as an integrated system. That was all classified work, he said, and he couldn't really talk about

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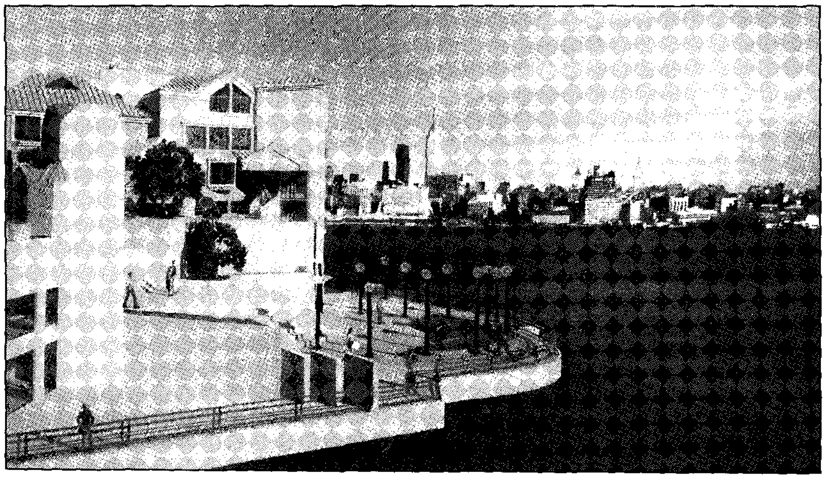

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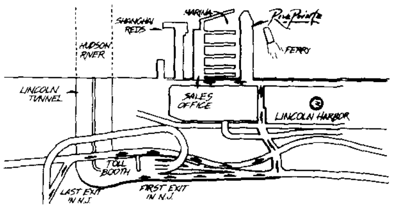

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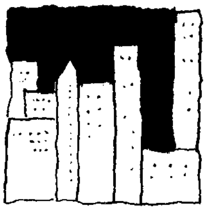
any of it. While he was deeply involved in that work, the April 4, 1983, launch date for the space shuttle carrying the TDRS arrived, and he monitored developments on that front with a certain interest, if only out of the corner of his eye. "Everything seemed to be going fine," Isaacs recalled. "They got the shuttle up fine, and later that day they got the TDRS, with its attached inertial upper-stage booster, out of the shuttle's cargo bay, no problem, everything seemed to be checking out fine, and then they powered up the booster engine, which, with its two stages and fifteen thousand pounds of thrust, was supposed to lift the satellite up to its twenty-two-thousand-mile-altitude orbit, and that, too, seemed to go along smoothly. The first-stage burn went perfectly—only, then, with the second-stage burn two-thirds completed, they suddenly experienced some sort of anomaly, and the satellite just disappeared from everybody's console. Nobody had any idea where it was, or even if it was still intact or what it was doing, whether it was tumbling, and, if so, at what rate—nothing.



"I was at work, minding my own business, when all at once people were literally running up and down the halls, just about knocking one another over, because this was a big emergency. Sure, the problem had been with the booster, which was somebody else's component, and not ours. The problem was not ours, but we were the only ones who could fix it, and there was over a hundred million dollars on the line with that satellite, not to speak of the years and years of human effort that had been put into the thing. They were sending up commands desperately, completely blind—they had no idea where the thing was.

"And there was an incredible element of time pressure, too, because once the TDRS had attained the proper orbit the explosive bolts connecting the satellite to the booster were supposed to be activated—a process that itself required the booster's own battery power—and then the booster would drift away and the satellite's own solar panels would be able to deploy, thereafter satisfying all the craft's energy requirements. Wherever the satellite was, the power in those batteries was quickly draining away—they knew that—and they knew that, at the very least, they had to get the booster to disengage itself from the satellite before the power ran out, because otherwise nothing would be possible.

"So they were sending up this steady stream of commands. The satellite, which, it turned out, was tumbling at something like thirty revolutions per minute, its burned-out booster still attached, was picking up interrupted, staggered portions of the stream, and sending back a steady stream of telemetry of its own—one that the ground station, in turn, once it had finally locked on to the satellite, was likewise receiving only in interrupted, staggered spurts. Remember, those guys weren't sitting there with binoculars evaluating the whole thing; all they had was their screens and monitors, across which an erratic stream of numbers was pouring, and from that they were having both to interpret what the hell was going on and to figure out how in hell to stabilize the situation—and they were having to do all that in real time, and, in fact, immediately. Finally, with only seconds to spare in the life of the booster's batteries, they did manage to get the booster to disengage from the satellite, the satellite to stop spinning, and its solar panels to deploy. Now their only problem was that the satellite was thousands and thousands of miles from where it was supposed to be, and it had just jettisoned the engine that might reasonably have seemed its only way of getting there."

Isaacs wasn't directly involved in the ensuing rescue mission. "They'd assembled the very top people by that point," he told me. "People a hell of a lot more experienced than I was—people who in many cases had been in the space business longer than I'd been alive. And it was a very intense period. I mean, sure, I was interested, but it wasn't the sort of thing where you could just mosey on over there, peer over their shoulders, kick your legs up onto the consoles, and shoot the breeze. These were very, *very* critical weeks—millions of dollars and years and years of people's lives were on the line."

Isaacs just kept to his own work. A few days later, they came to him. It turned out that since they no longer had access to the booster's huge engines they were going to attempt to nudge the satellite thousands of miles into posi-

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tion just by firing the craft's miniature steering thrusters—that they were going to be executing an elaborate series of exaggerated variations on Isaacs' own change-of-velocity maneuvers. They asked Isaacs for all his backup files on the subject, and he handed them over. He briefed them on everything he knew, and then he returned to his own projects. "It was ridiculous," Isaacs said. "They were going to try to replace the effect of fifteen thousand pounds of thrust with these measly, miniature-toothpaste-tube-size rockets, packing less than a pound of thrust each—minithrusters that weren't designed to fire for more than a fraction of a second at a time. They were going to be attempting to adjust the satellite's orbit by almost ten thousand miles powered by the equivalent of a precisely timed sequence of tiny sneezes. I mean, it was all impossible on its face. Only, they did it. It took them nearly two months, but finally they got the damn thing parked exactly where it was supposed to be. It was truly amazing."

ISAACS remained at TRW for four years, working for a while on a concept-design team (producing proposals for new satellites), and for a while after that on a series of advanced-technology studies (producing proposals presupposing technologies that might not even be available for twenty-five years—"processes so advanced," Isaacs explained, "that it would be like showing a TV to George Washington, or to a caveman"). And though the work was exciting, he began to lose interest in it. He was feeling increasingly constricted. "I'd go to work, and it was just a job," he told me. "I did it because I could do it. But, you know, you work on one spacecraft project, you work on another—it's the same process, you have to put up with the same stuff. I mean, yeah, now it's great to talk about, but it was just a job. And then, beyond that, I was tired of being told I couldn't do this, that, or the other because I was too young, or because So-and-So had been there longer and deserved a crack at it first. You got the feeling that you would be allowed to rise to a position where you might really push through innovative projects only after you'd got so old that the innovative juices would have long since been bled out of you. So by 1984 I was getting restless."

While Isaacs was on a vacation trip

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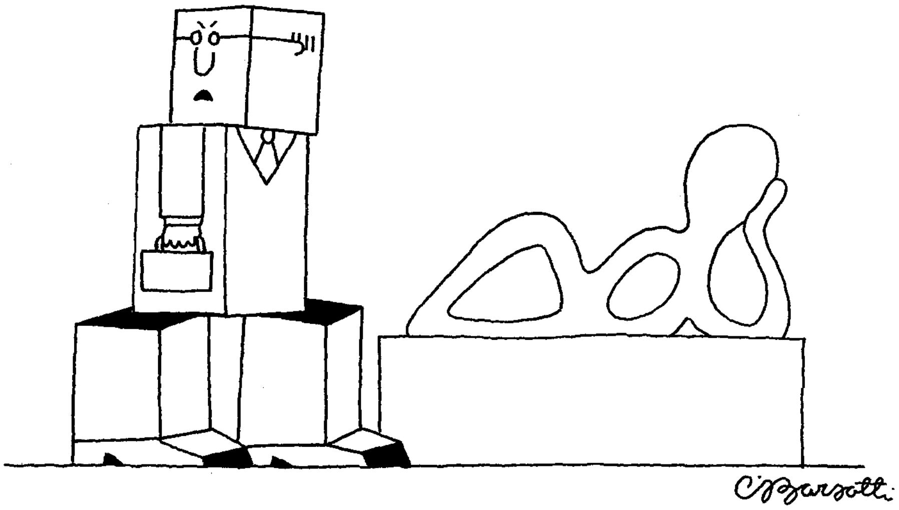


"Miss Crutchfield, have you gone mad?"

back to New Jersey to visit his family, a friend of his father's, a money manager, suggested that Isaacs might want to look into Wall Street, which at the time was busy climbing toward its own stratospheric levels. "I came into town one day," he told me. "I walked into some of the places down on the Street, and, I mean, compared with working in the basement over at TRW, with all the mechanical hardware and the cables and the reaction wheels and the gyros strewn all about—we had gyros down there in the basement, involved in long-term real-time trials, that had been spinning for five years, and it was somebody's job just to monitor the things, to come in each morning and check that they were all still spinning. To go from that into one of these firms with the paintings on the walls, the plush carpets, the gold laminate, the low lights, and the wood panelling and the elevators and the brass and they take your coat when you come in. I'd never seen anything like that, and I said to myself, 'I don't know what they do here, but I want to come back here to work.'"

Isaacs spoke with some Wall Street people ("right firms, probably the wrong people," he said), and they told him that while it was true that the Street was eagerly recruiting technically trained outsiders, it might be better if he first got some seasoning at a business school. So he returned to Los Angeles, applied to U.C.L.A.'s Graduate School of Management, and was accepted for the fall term.

Generally, he told me, he enjoyed business school, though he experienced a decided clash of cultures. He explained, "I mean, to go from advanced calculus, the sort of thing you used in engineering, where questions had sharp, precise answers, down to the tiniest decimal—from that to accounting classes, where you'd say, 'Yeah, but these figures don't reflect actual cash flow,' and they'd answer, 'No problem, this is how we'll account for it'—Clearly, I was in a different world. A lot of it was just make-believe—there wasn't really any money there at all—and for a while that was a tough concept to handle."

Nevertheless, the sort of dogged precision that had been drilled into Isaacs during his days as an engineer stood him in good stead during the interneship he landed for the summer between his two years at U.C.L.A. He had come back to New York during the Easter break and walked unannounced into the offices of several firms. "This was a period when they were recruiting mathematicians, statisticians, scientists, engineers—technical wizards of all sorts," he recalled. " 'Rocket scientists' was the generic term they'd coined for the whole lot of them, as a sort of a joke. But there I was, an *actual rocket scientist,* sitting out in the lobby. It did give me a certain cachet."

Isaacs was hired by First Boston, being told initially that the firm could use a few extra hands programming over in Fixed Income Research. "But I actually ended up working on a project that was ideal for me," he said. "They had me analyzing the convexity of mortgage-backed securities. That was suddenly a very hot topic on the Street, lots of clients were interested in it. I was at the center of it. I got to speak to a lot of significant people both inside and outside the firm, and the work received a lot of attention. Most other summer internes were spending their time simply rotating from one department to another, but I was getting to make vital, very current contributions."

I asked what a mortgage-backed security was, and why it convexed.

"Fannie Maes, Ginnie Maes—that sort of thing," Isaacs said, getting up and ambling over to the whiteboard. "O.K., this is a simplified version. The thing is that most homeowners make their regular mortgage payments to their banks and figure that the bank will continue to hold the mortgage on their house until they pay it off. Whereas in fact most banks sold off most of those loans a long time ago. They had all this paper, all these mortgages—in truth, they'd lent out all their money—whereas what they wanted was fresh money so that they could originate more mortgages and engage in other sorts of profit-generating investments. So they sold entire portfolios of their mortgages to various agencies like Fannie Mae and Ginnie Mae—for a small fee the banks continued to service the mortgages, to pass the monthly installments along, so that the homeowners never knew the difference. And those agencies in turn gathered together huge pools of similarly denominated mortgages, all of them paying out at a similar percentage and maturing around the same date, securitized them, and then subdivided the pools into more manageable offerings. So that, for instance, an institutional investor could come along and buy a ten-million-dollar piece of a vast pool of mortgages paying out at ten-point-five per cent through the year 2014. That would be your standard, generic mortgage-backed security—one from which the investor could expect to receive his monthly portion of the payments up until the mortgages underlying it had all paid out. But the point is, he might at some time want to sell off that particular security, or else to buy other securities paying out at other interest rates with other maturities. And the question was, on any given day what should any of them be worth?

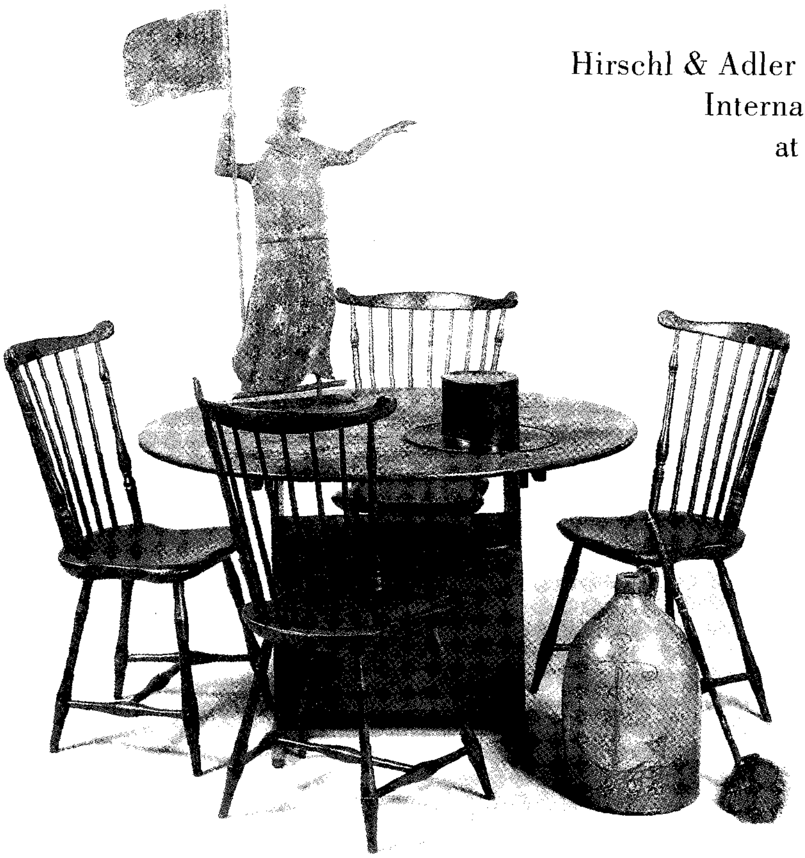
"Well, that depended, of course, on

the interest rates, the yields, prevailing in the market on the day in question. If the prevailing yield was ten-point-five per cent, and he wanted to buy an instrument paying out at ten-point-five per cent, he could expect to pay par; that is, one hundred cents on the dollar. But if the prevailing rates were down, at ten per cent, he'd have to pay a premium to buy a security paying out at such a relatively high rate as ten-point-five per cent—he might have to pay over a hundred and two cents on the dollar. Conversely, if prevailing rates were up at eleven per cent, he could demand a discount, since he was going to be purchasing a security still paying out at only ten-point-five per cent—he might expect to get it for under ninety-eight cents on the dollar. In other words, the value of mortgage-backed securities is highly sensitive to fluctuations in prevailing yields and interest rates.

"That much was elementary. Everybody knew that. But people generally assumed that, regarding the relationship between prevailing yields and the value of these various instruments, if you charted it on a graph you'd get a straight line. Whereas the line is actually curved—it's convex. There's a reason for that"—and no doubt there is (it has something to do with "the compounding effect when discounting cash flows"), but, frankly, Isaacs, who was now becoming a veritable whirling dervish over at the whiteboard, once again lost me for a while. "Not that it matters when yields are fluctuating by just a few basis points either way," he went on. "The two lines almost dovetail. But, as you'll recall, in the late seventies and early eighties we were seeing huge fluctuations in prevailing yields—interest rates into the high teens, and even the low twenties. And there it really began to matter.

"Now, generally, mortgage-backed securities have a positive convexity. That is, all things being equal, when prevailing yields go down by a single percentage point, the price of the security should go up by more than it goes down when prevailing yields go up by the same single percentage point. And that's all to the good: high upside, low downside, very attractive—people were willing to pay a lot for that sort of profile. But it turned out that there was a catch, because with those big fluctuations in prevailing interest rates you began to see a lot of homeowners refinancing the mortgages that underlay those huge pools. People who'd initially taken out mortgages at fifteen per cent were prepaying their mortgages, paying them off, refinancing them with loans they were able to get at ten per cent. Tens of thousands were doing so. And suddenly all those investors who were holding those juicy mortgage-backed securities, thinking they'd locked in a fifteen-per-cent yield for the next twenty-odd years—and who'd paid a handsome premium for the privilege—were instead getting paid off right now, today, and having to reinvest the sudden lump sum at the currently much lower rates. Ouch: that hurt twice.

"So it turned out that, because of that prepayment factor, mortgage-backed securities didn't always have nearly as much positive convexity as had been thought; in fact, in some cases they showed negative convexity. And that's what wasn't completely understood the summer I was modelling all this for



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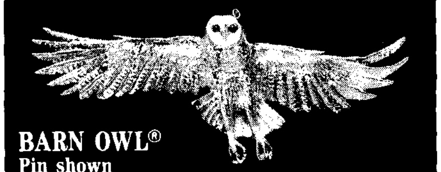

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First Boston. In the wake of those wild fluctuations earlier in the decade, several institutions had taken a real bath on all this—to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars—because they didn’t fully anticipate the convexity effect on many mortgage-backed securities. All of them had people desperately working on convexity, and that summer I was First Boston’s man on the case—analyzing the problem, modelling the behavior, developing software to evaluate convexity effects, and so forth. Toward the end of the summer, they brought in research people from all over the company for a seminar where I presented my findings—I was very popular—and on my last day I gave another talk, on the current state of the art in spacecraft design, which was also well attended and quite successful.”

AFTER a quick browse at his console, a brief search-and-peck, Isaacs recounted for me how he returned to U.C.L.A. and completed his second year, and then came back to New York, to First Boston. He was told that because of his prior success he was welcome to follow virtually any path he liked. He chose to become a trader of mortgage-backed securities.

“During the previous summer,” he said, “I would come up with results based on my pure research, and I’d go over to the traders and say, ‘This is what I think is going to happen,’ and they’d look at me as if I were crazy, and say, ‘That’s not at all what’s going to happen, this is what’s going to happen.’ I’d ask why, and they’d say, ‘Because it just is, that’s the way the securities trade.’ And the point is, when it came to pricing those securities the traders in effect *were* the market. While I was convinced of the value of research, I wanted to make it applicable, and to see it working in the real world. It was just like the situation back at TRW, with the guys who’d spent years designing the various components of the TDRS but wouldn’t have recognized the completed satellite if they’d come smack dab upon it sitting there in the High Bay, or if it had come hurtling out of the sky and hit them on their heads—which, as you know, it almost did. I just always liked applications—the fun of making things work in the real world—or, anyway, I thought I did.”

Isaacs spent the next several months in the general sales-and-trading training program. Then, one day, when he was only three-quarters of the way through his training course, his supervisor came over and said, “They need you on the desk right now.” He went down to the trading floor and was told to forget about any further training—he wasn’t going back, he was there to stay. He took his place on the huge trading floor, among scores of traders, each hooked up to a telephone with literally dozens of buttons. “It was a whole lot different from research, that’s for sure,” Isaacs recalled. “It was incredibly noisy. There wasn’t the time for any sort of considered analysis: everything was instantaneous, and it was all continuous. You were hooked into the hoot-and-holler, as it was called—everybody had a speaker that was hooked up to all the branch offices around the country, everybody was talking at once, everybody picking out snatches of what he himself needed to hear. At first, it was quite intimidating, but gradually I got used to it.”

The things that Isaacs now began trading were brand-new derivatives of traditional mortgage-backed pass-through securities. The investment houses are continually inventing new ways to subdivide their offerings—adding ever more complex and elaborate bells and whistles, as the phrase goes, or else ostensibly streamlining already complex entities into more simple components. In this instance, someone had come up with a scheme to divide mortgage-backed securities into two parts—one made up exclusively of all future payments of interest, and the other made up exclusively of all future payments of principal—and to sell those two parts separately. For a variety of reasons, these instruments turned out to be even more sensitive than most other mortgage-backed securities to the propensity of the underlying mortgage holders to prepay their mortgages; that is to say, to fluctuations in prevailing interest rates. Depending on which way interest rates were going, investors in these new instruments could make a handsome killing or, instead, lose a handsome fortune. “Some of those things were negatively convexed—spectacularly so,” Isaacs said. “They had their valid, if esoteric, uses—as sensible hedges for institutions trading in specific venues of other sorts—but they made truly dangerous vehicles for speculation. You saw that every day working as a trader. The trouble was that the pressure on traders was to sell them, period. Move them out. All sorts of institutions—savings and loans, for example—were obviously buying these things on a purely speculative basis. My boss at the time would yell over, 'Get on the hoot-and-holler and tell people these things are really cheap today and that they ought to buy them up'—and that wasn't strictly true. There were times when it seemed like urging a four-year-old to go out and play in the middle of a superhighway. The thing is, it wasn't our job out there on the trading floor to be explaining those nuances to people. For one thing, we didn't have the time. And, anyway, all information about these instruments was publicly available: there were just a lot of people and institutions who even after the nuances were explained were just so damn sure of themselves that they still insisted on playing the vehicles purely for speculation. And a lot of people got burned."

Isaacs paused, and then continued, "It turned out I didn't enjoy trading that much after all. Every once in a while, the sheer immensity of the figures passing over my desk would momentarily become real to me, and that was always unnerving. Beyond that, out there on the trading floor you never got a moment to think, to reflect. Being involved in applications was one thing, but the whole other side of my brain was beginning to atrophy."

Around that time, Isaacs' current firm offered him a job almost better tailored to his talents and aptitudes than any he could have designed for himself. He would be taking ideas developed in research and making them understandable to traders and salesmen, translating mathematical models into concepts that could be conveyed to clients—or else taking problems that the firm's people and clients were encountering in the real world and bringing them up to the research department, where they could be subjected to quantitative analysis. He left First Boston for this new job, and as the months passed he became a sort of all-round trouble-shooter for the firm, trying to solve the problems nobody else could figure out. Gradually, he drifted into the job he was currently holding—trying to keep tabs on the savings-and-loan crisis for the entire firm.

"As I say, I like working on things

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that aren't working, and the thrift industry in this country is not working in a big way," Isaacs said. "Essentially, I've had to become a lawyer—or, at least, an expert in this area of the law." He pulled out a thick volume bound in official federal tan: The Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery, and Enforcement Act of 1989. His copy was bulging with color-coded tags and bookmarks. "This book has—let's see—four hundred and sixty-seven pages, and, as you can see, there are no pictures, and this is just the *conference report*. The actual law is three times as long. My job is not only to know this book inside out but also to follow all the impending changes in accounting standards, legislation, oversight practices, regulations. I'm on the phone with lawyers and regulators every day, trying to get our people information on the developing situation before they read it in tomorrow's papers. I'm the firm's designated expert.

"In part, we're trying to anticipate things that could move markets and provide us with profit potential—or, at least, keep us from losing money. And, in part, my clients are the savings-and-loan institutions themselves—or, rather, professionals in the firm whose long-term clients include S. & L.s, some in worse shape than others. I'm regularly fielding calls from our own guys: 'Listen, Gary, we've got an S. & L. out in So-and-So, and their situation is such-and-such. What can we do for them? What would be the most effective way for them to meet the new guidelines? How are those guidelines changing? Any exceptions they should know about? What are the regulators saying that hasn't yet hit the papers? How are they saying it? Was their tone positive? Even though they're saying that, do you think they might change their minds in three months? How about in three weeks?' That sort of thing, all day long." He nodded over toward the console. "And the problem is, with a lot of this stuff it's impossible to know. We can't even get solid figures on the basic dimensions of the crisis."

It sounded like the TDRS mission all over again, I observed.

"It's a lot like that," Isaacs said. "Believe me, I've had the thought myself. But one also notices the differences. The environment out in space is filled with all kinds of hazards, but you

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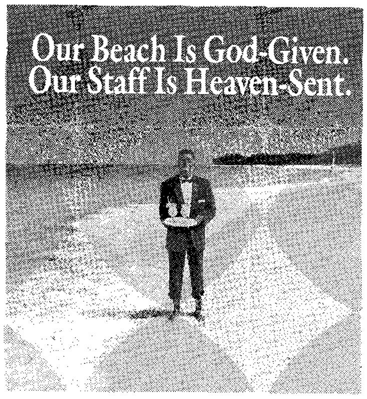

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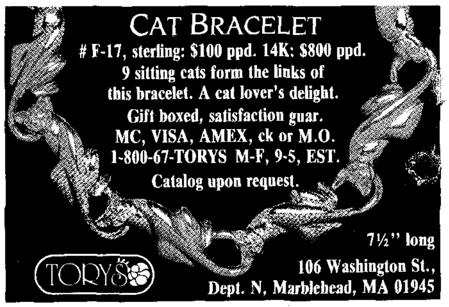

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can model it: there are certain laws that pertain and that are unchanging—you can count on them absolutely—and the spacecraft meanwhile has very sophisticated guidance systems, and, more important, it has deep reserves and redundancies built into the system. A lot of the time here, by contrast, we have a much lower level of mathematical sophistication. Sure, the environment is more tangible, in the sense that you can put your hands on it: you can go out and look at the various office buildings, malls, and housing subdivisions the government suddenly owns; you can review the bank's records; everything's not floating around, stranded, twenty thousand miles in space. But in another sense the environment features a lot more uncertainty—events you can't possibly predict. It's like trying to mobilize a satellite rescue but not being able to rely on the basic laws of physics—or seeing those laws change every few weeks, in what seems to be a completely random manner. I mean, economics has its cycles, but we've never been quite so far out on a cycle before, and nothing seems to pertain.

"You've got the federal government changing accounting regulations from one day to the next, so that dozens of once healthy S. & L.s suddenly turn sick. You've got the fallout from all those speculative ventures—I'm meeting a lot of the same sorts of thrifts over here I last saw over there on the trading floor, gobbling up all those hybrid mortgage derivatives. You've got fraud. It's incredible. The numbers are so huge it just dwarfs any other financial crisis we've ever been exposed to. And, believe me, it's got *terrible* convexity." He paused, and then said, "But, anyway, that's how I pass my time these days."

WITH that, Isaacs came to a full stop. As he talked, he had indeed been seeming to suggest a sense of growing distance from his current vocation.

"Well," I said, "I guess the obvious question is: What are you going to do next?"

Isaacs' expression darkened. He got up from behind his desk and went over to the door, which had been slightly ajar. He went out into the corridor, peered around, reëntered, shutting the door firmly behind him. He closed the curtains over his glass wall, cutting the office off from the view of occupants of the various cubicles outside, and then returned to his desk.

"The thing is, it has all been a giant mistake," he said abruptly. "I've been miserable the entire time. I mean, sure, it was fine, it was interesting, but M.I.T., rocket science, the Street—my heart was never really in any of it, even if at times my head was. I was just doing it because I could do it. It wasn't what I really wanted to be doing. There was only one thing I ever *really* wanted to be doing, and now the time has come. I've got to quit fooling myself—I've got to just go out and do it."

And that is?

"This," Isaacs said. He reached into the bottom drawer of his desk, burrowed beneath an overlay of miscellaneous papers, extracted a glossy catalogue, and tossed the catalogue onto the desktop, facing me.

It was the catalogue of the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Clown College, in Venice, Florida.

"All I ever wanted to be, from the earliest moment I can remember, was a clown," Isaacs now declared. "I used to pester my parents to take me to the circus every time it came to town. We'd go, and I'd make sure to 'get lost' behind the tents, just wandering around, soaking it all in: the elephants and the trapeze artists and the peanut venders and the clowns, the clowns—especially the clowns! One of the peak experiences of my childhood was the time my father took me down to see the Circus Hall of Fame, in Sarasota, Florida. I taught myself to juggle by the time I was ten. I taught myself to throw small pieces of food high into the air, or else get somebody else to drop them from third- or fourth-story windows, and catch them in my mouth: M&M's, peanuts, French fries, grapes. Grapes are especially good—nice aerodynamics, and they don't break your teeth if you miss. With devilled eggs, you don't have a lot of room for error.

"My mom got me a unicycle when I was twelve. I learned to ride it, and I'd play basketball on top of it, juggle. I taught myself to ride it blindfolded—the sort of thing that, if you'd asked me about it at M.I.T., whether it was even possible to do it, I'd have figured it was like flying a helicopter upside down: theoretically impossible, but doable." Isaacs started toward the whiteboard, reconsidered, and sat back down.

"Actually," he continued, "I applied

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"I sure lucked out with you!"

• •

to Clown College once before—in 1978, after completing my undergraduate program at M.I.T. It was a highly competitive admissions process—more so, even, than for M.I.T. Several thousand people applied for a few dozen slots. And I got accepted. But my folks just about threw a fit—they hadn't invested all their hard-earned money in getting me an M.I.T. degree so I could run off and become a clown—with the result that I let it ride. Maybe it's better that I did—better that I proved to myself that I could do all this other stuff. But O.K., now I've proved it.

"At TRW, too, I was continually haunted by intimations of my alternative life. It turned out that right down the street from our Redondo Beach facility were the tracks where they parked the big, long, silver circus trains whenever they came to town. I'd duck out of work early to go over and gaze. I love trains, because they're part of the circus. Why do you think I did my master's thesis on trains?

"And then, coming here to Wall Street, I still wasn't able to shake the hankering. In the morning, getting dressed, I'd see myself climbing into my professional corporate suit for another day of doing my professional corporate shtick, and sometimes I'd step back for a few moments, and it just seemed to me so funny that these people were listening to me and taking what I had to say seriously, because all along it was just me, Gary, tooling around on my unicycle. Evenings, I'd head out of here, with all the other suits, and sometimes the incongruity would just overwhelm me.

"But, I mean, I'm tired of all this. I'm tired of coming to work and passing my time coming up with ever more complicated ways of marketing securities, dressing them up with ever more elaborate bells and whistles. I want to dress *myself* up with *real* bells and whistles."

Isaacs went on to tell me how earlier this year, when the circus was in town, he'd taken off from work early and headed for Madison Square Garden to audition, along with dozens of other would-be clowns, and he'd been the only one wearing a suit. (The Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus holds a day of auditions at each of the major stops on its annual tour, and promising candidates are invited to apply for admission to Clown College, which offers an eight-week course of study each fall. Tuition is free, but a six-hundred-dollar fee is required for makeup and costumes. The Ringling Brothers organization operates the college as a sort of clown nursery.) Actually, at that audition Isaacs kept himself pretty much over to the side. The place was crawling with newspaper photographers and with cameramen from the local TV stations, and Isaacs didn't want to risk being captured in print or on video, his secret hankering blatantly displayed for everyone to see. Not yet, anyway. He still wasn't sure. But in the days that followed he did summon the nerve once again to fill out the application form (a daunting six-page inventory, with questions ranging from which foreigners you like most, and which least, to when you last cried, and why), and he spent the next several months waiting anxiously.

"And then the other day," he continued, "as I was coming back in from lunch, my secretary gave me a message that Stephen Smith, the director of Clown College, was trying to get in touch with me. 'What are you doing?' she said, handing me the message. 'Running off to join the circus?' She laughed uproariously at her own joke. People here don't have a clue. So I called Smith back, and he said, 'I've been reviewing your application, and I have just two questions for you: First, do you have any idea what you're getting yourself into here? And, if so, are you completely out of your mind?' I answered yes on both counts, and he said, 'Well, in that case I have the honor to inform you that you've been accepted into Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Clown College's class of 1990.' So there you go."

Isaacs reached into the space between his desk and the wall and pulled out an artist's portfolio. "Another one of the things they don't know about me here is that in my spare time I've been pursuing a parallel career in photography," he said. "I mean, sure, on a much less exalted level—but it's one of the things I've been doing to keep my sanity." He unzipped his portfolio and invited me to examine several examples, a nice variety of images. "One of the things I intend to do is to keep a photographic record of the entire enterprise—a season at Clown College as seen from a clown's point of view," he continued. My gaze had come to rest on a self-portrait he had apparently taken a few months earlier (it was signed and dated 1990), himself standing, facing the mirror in his bathroom. His pose was dour, serious, professional, corporate, the camera held at his chest. Atop his head, however, he'd perched one of those large circular aluminum reflector lamps. He'd frontlit the scene from below, so that his body was casting a goofy shadow onto the blank wall behind. The shadow looked like one of those cheap Martians from the B-movies of the fifties, or else some deep-sea diver thirty fathoms down. Clearly—you could see it in the eyes—it was time for this investment banker to be coming up for air.

A FEW minutes later, I was bidding Isaacs goodbye, thanking him for his story and wishing him well. Once in the elevator, however, I shuddered. I mean, here was a man who probably knew about as much as anyone about the true extent of the savings-and-loan crisis facing our country, and he was saying, "You know what, forget this—I'd rather be a clown!" It was a little scary. But, in any case, I was hooked, and I knew I'd be having to keep up with this fellow one way or another as he launched into his new career.

In mid-August, Isaacs took leave of his job, and of Manhattan, and drove to Florida. Venice is about half an hour south of Sarasota, which, in turn, is about an hour south of Tampa Bay, or roughly midway down Florida's Gulf Coast. Ringling Brothers has had its winter quarters in Venice since 1959; Clown College opened there in 1968 and has been a fixture of the place ever since. Clown College puts its student body up in a motel along the Gulf waterfront about a mile away from the campus, and I managed to reach Isaacs there by phone the evening after the school's opening-day orientation session.

He was exultant. "They had us picked up by a bus here at around eight-forty-five this morning," he reported. "About forty of us piled in, and they carted us over to the college, which takes place in a big white hangarlike building, the main structure in the middle of the circus's winter quarters. It's sort of like a big concrete tent, with yellow-and-red pennants streaming all around, and the big colorful circus logo splashed across the building's side—'THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH!' We got out of the bus, and they had us gather in front of the main entrance, by the turnstiles. The doors were still closed. This is the building where every year they give the public première for each new edition of the circus, before they take it out on the road—it's like a permanent Big Top. We were all just standing there, waiting for something to happen, and the bus driv-

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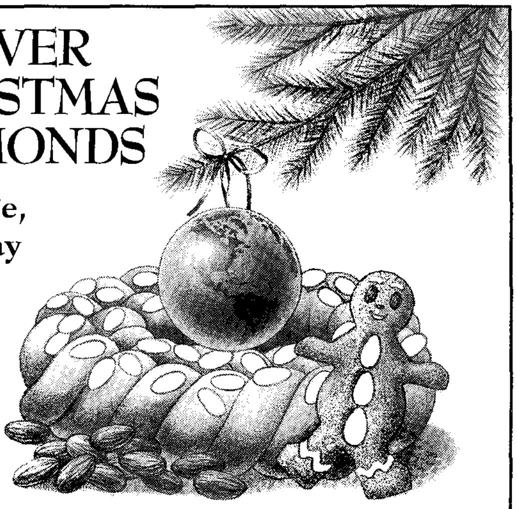

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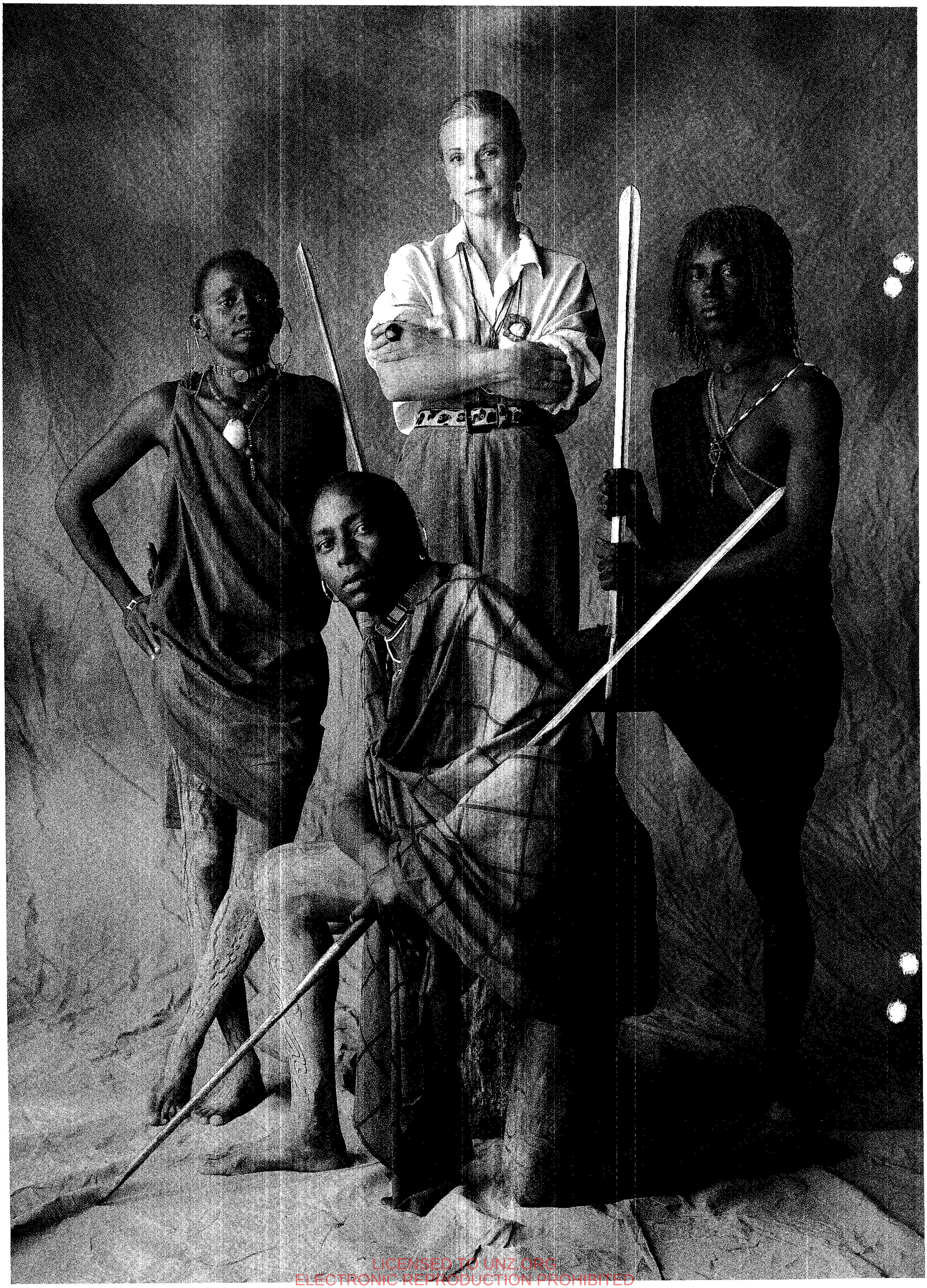

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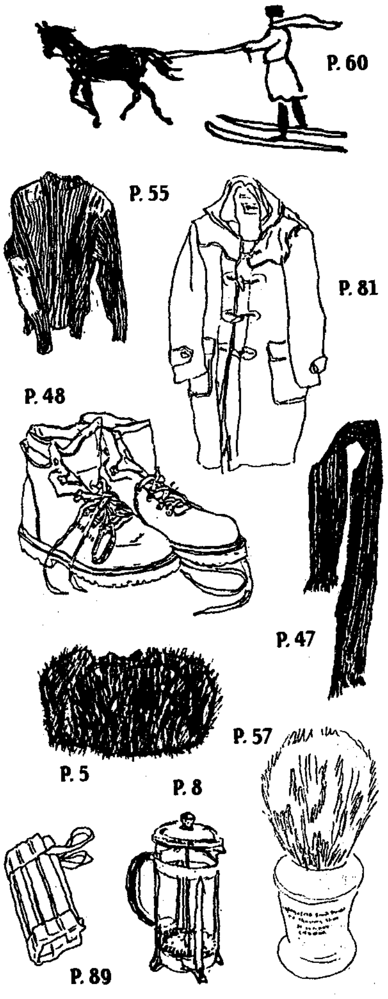

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er banged on the door, and suddenly this roar of music kicked up inside, the doors slid open, and pandemonium had broken loose. We stood there dumbfounded, thunderstruck, weak-kneed: it took a moment for our eyes to adjust to the relative darkness inside, but gradually we could make out bleachers all around, a high triumphal arch of braided helium balloons bobbing high over the main ring, a bubble machine turned up full blast and dispensing a giddy stream of bubbles, and, in the center of the ring, about forty people going full-tilt bonkers at the sight of us. Turned out they were the faculty—there is a one-to-one student-faculty ratio—and they were cheering and jumping around, and somehow their cheers were being piped through the P.A. system, mingling with the music, so that the whole thing sounded like a huge, full-fledged ovation. For a second, it also looked as if the bleachers were packed, but as our eyes got further adjusted to things we realized that most of the audience was actually made up of full-scale painted cardboard cutouts that they'd propped into most of the seats: really silly-looking figures—kids, parents, pets, swamis. It all provoked an incredible explosion of emotion. I wish they'd had us wired up to measure our reactions: we'd have blown the needles right off their monitors. It's all been worth it. If nothing else comes of this whole thing, it was all worth it for just that one moment.

JEANNE

"Anyway, then they escorted us over to our seats in the bleachers facing the main ring, up there with the cardboard throng. Eventually, the music stopped and the faculty calmed down, and we, who'd taken to whoop-whoop-whooping like those audiences on 'Arsenio Hall,' finally calmed down as well. The director of the college came up to the podium to welcome us. He was dressed a bit more formally than the others, which is to say in a white dress shirt, a white silk bow tie, white sneakers, and spanking-white farmer-style overalls. 'I'm Steve Smith,' he announced, 'and I'm going to be your guide through clown hell.' He's a youngish-looking guy, but he told us that he graduated from Clown College almost twenty years ago, with the class of 1971, and toured with the circus for several years after that. Most of the faculty turned out to be graduates of earlier Clown College classes. Several of them are currently active with the circus and have been pulled back from the two touring units for the duration of the college. Somebody was telling me how in 1967, when Ringling Brothers changed owners, there were only fourteen active performers in Clown Alley, and their average age was fifty-eight. Irvin Feld, the new owner, is supposed to have said, 'I know they can fall down, but can they get back up again?,' and to have founded the college the following year in an effort to remedy the situation. Today, there are over fifty clowns in the two units, almost all of them Clown College graduates, with an average age of twenty-three. As you can see, I'm getting started a bit late.

"So Smith began with a quote from Albert Einstein, about how the most beautiful possible experience is that of the mysterious, how the sense of wonder is the fundamental emotion at the cradle of both true art and true science, and how if you've lost it you might as well be dead. He went on to say that during the next ten weeks they were going to be teaching us a variety of techniques. And when you look at the schedule it's almost daunting what they've got in store for us: mandatory workshops on juggling, stilt-walking, magic tricks, makeup, prop-building, costume construction, pyrotechnics, unicycling, pantomime, improvisation, gag and character development, acrobatics and pratfalls—all that just for starters. But Smith said the main thing they were going to be trying to do was to stretch our imaginations. He gave this very nice pep talk, and then he introduced each member of the faculty—lots of whooping all around—and then he had us stand up one at a time and introduce ourselves, say where we came from, and tell why we'd decided to come here.

"The other students are all younger than I am. They come from all over, from places like Battle Creek, Michigan; Pullman, Washington; Oshkosh, Wisconsin; Upper Black Eddy, Pennsylvania; Mt. Desert Island, Maine; Atlanta, Georgia; and Venice, California. That fellow had only hours earlier completed a sixty-eight-hour transcontinental Venice-to-Venice bus run, so as to get here in time for the opening ceremonies. Some of them had great rationales for why they were here. The first kid got up and said, 'I want to be a clown because I want to freak out with a mass team.' Another guy said that it was because he got a lot of strange, crazy ideas in his head and he figured this was a way to get paid for them. One kid said it was because this was the only school that would take him. One of the women—about a fifth of the class are women—said she simply had no choice but to be a clown. I said I wanted to be a clown because they wouldn't let me ride my unicycle downtown where I worked. Another guy said he wanted to be a clown because he was sick of pulling teeth. That shut us all up. 'Cow teeth, that is,' he elaborated. So you can see I'm not the only one here with a curious résumé. Most of them are fresh out of college, or high school, or else have some sort of acting or theatrical background. But the guy they have me rooming with was an accountant with an insurance company in Connecticut for four years.

"So then Smith told us that on this one day only—and never again—we'd be offered an escorted tour of the back lot, out beyond the far hangar gates. We're never to go back there again, under any circumstances, because that's where they keep and train the wild animals all year round. And, sure enough, when we got back there, there they were—tigers and panthers and elephants and llamas and monkeys and cows—"

"Cows?" I asked.

"Yeah. A lady explained to me how they're trying to teach this group of cows to waltz. As we were walking around, taking it all in, one trainer came up to me and whispered, 'The real reason they don't let you back here is for fear you'll realize how similar the training regimens are.'

"We broke for lunch—today a catered affair, but from here on out strictly brown-bag. We got to know one another a little better. One fellow had the name Costello on his ID label, and I asked him if he was any relation. 'To Elvis, no,' he said. 'To Lou, yeah.' Turns out he's his great-grandson.

"After lunch, they had us doing all sorts of preliminary things: ID photos,

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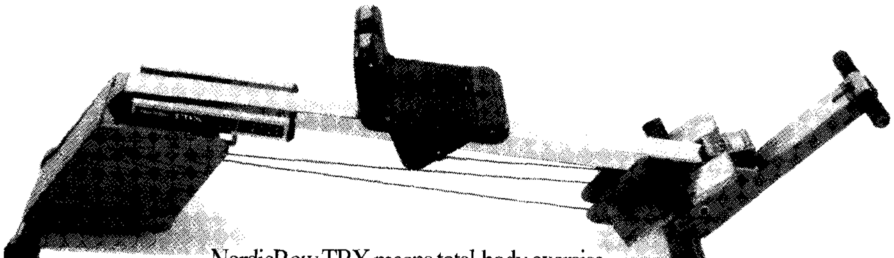

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"And between stations I kept coming back into the central arena. At one point, I was watching a group of the kids playing around with the bubble machine. They were miming baseball, and then football, and then golf. They were pirouetting as if in ballet. And gradually they devolved into a school of slow-motion fish, bobbing and floating in imaginary water, rippling their finlike arms, trying to mouth the bubbles, to open wide and swallow them whole. Suddenly I had this funny sensation, because for a moment it was exactly like being back in the savings-and-loan business all over again.

"It's incredible how well organized they've got *everything* over there. Unicycles lined up along the periphery, one beside another: three feet high, four feet, six feet; one that's actually five wheels, one on top of another, so that the wheels mesh like gears; and one whose rim is made up entirely of shoes, one at the end of each spoke. Barrels of juggling pins. Stilts, low and tall and taller yet. All those portable shtick contraptions: the reducing machine, the washing machine, the food-vending wagon, the phony stove, the hollowed-out VW bug, the camera on a tripod with an eyeball lewdly ogling out, dangling at the end of a Slinky. Everything just sitting there, ready to be used, perfectly laid out, all of it close at hand, perfectly functional. Let me tell you, that place would put the High Bay back at TRW to shame."

ABOUT a week later, when I telephoned Isaacs again, I found him somewhat subdued—though not much. "Some crazy people got off that bus last week," he remarked, with a tired sigh. "A lot of them are really good. There are some incredible jugglers, great stilt-walkers, and several have all kinds of acting experience. It's pretty intimidating. It reminds me of my first days at M.I.T.—how you might have been the brightest kid back in your high-school class but now you were suddenly just like everybody else, if that, and how, in fact, for the first time in your life everybody else seemed a lot smarter than you. I imagine I'll get over it, but it's a little scary.

"We put on a variety show the other night—the faculty giving the students a chance to strut their stuff—and it was quite disconcerting, quite humbling. There were guys there eating fire, doing elaborate unicycle stunts, one guy juggling while he was handcuffed, a woman doing the equivalent of a competition-level gymnastics floor exercise. I didn't have any idea what I was going to do. Finally, I put in for thirty seconds with a piece I was calling 'A Very Cheap Bit.' Steve Smith has this line about how we should always remember that 'a cheap bit, well done, is a well-done cheap bit.' Well, this was about as cheap as you can get. I came into the ring, all decked out in whiteface, rubbing my belly dolefully, as if I were really hungry, reaching into my pockets but extracting nothing—there was nothing there—and finally reaching into this virtually empty paper bag, poking all about, and eventually pulling out a single marshmallow. I then had all kinds of difficulty trying to get the thing into my mouth—my hand kept missing my face—till finally, in exasperation, I threw the marshmallow straight into the air—oh, twenty or thirty feet, so it disappeared into the darkness—and then, when it came plummeting back down, I managed to catch it perfectly in my open mouth. And I got a standing ovation—stole the show. It was great."

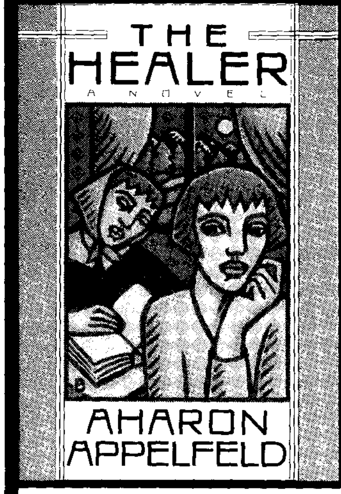
ABOUT a week after that call, I telephoned Isaacs once again, and this time he was decidedly more subdued. "I'm so sore," he said. "We all are. So incredibly tired. This place is like boot camp. They have us going fourteen hours a day, six days a week. You get up, stiff and sore from the day before. The night before, you were too tired even to notice. It used to be you could hardly wait to get over there—the blocks passing by in the bus seemed endless—but now you're just desperately trying to squeeze in a few last moments of sleep and—bam!—you're already there. The first four hours in the morning, they have us doing acrobatics, stilt-walking, juggling. By lunch— The first few days, at lunchtime people were hopping about, showing off, *experimenting* with fresh turns. Now lunchtime comes and it's like a landscape after battle—bodies strewn across the various mats, kids sprawled out sleeping or quietly moaning, massaging their strained ligaments. And then they have us up again, doing our routines—spitting water, falling off ladders, throwing pies, exploding little gunpowder-filled detonators off our backs, ducking hurled boards—all afternoon long and into the night. Being big. Big is something they keep emphasizing: how you have to be big, expansive, how your gestures have to play all the way back to the last row in Madison Square Garden, almost a quarter of a mile away. And then energy level: how your performance level has to be up, way up, from the moment you enter the arena till you march out with the finale, way up *and yet modulated*, under control, so you always still have someplace to go."

I asked Isaacs how he would compare Clown College with M.I.T.

"Oh, there's no comparison," he said. "Clown College is much more demanding—physically, obviously, but mentally as well. At M.I.T., you had classes four hours a day, maybe, and you took notes. If you didn't understand something, you went up and asked. If you missed a class, you borrowed somebody else's notes. It was all relatively casual. Here there are no notes. They show you a stunt, how to do a front flip landing slam on your back, say, and you do it right away. It's impossible, but you do it. You do it again. One more time. And then they say, 'Now do it backward.' You're not scrawling notes across a piece of paper—it's your own body you're writing on. And it requires the utmost mental alertness. At M.I.T., you messed up a math problem: fine, cross it out and start over again. You can't stilt-walk casually: it requires total concentration and centeredness, each time, all the time. At M.I.T., you messed up and you were only hurting yourself. Here others are depending on you every single second.

"And, in all this, college is obviously just a precursor of life in the circus itself. They're on the road three hundred and twenty-nine days, doing more than five hundred performances a year. Forget M.I.T. The level of concentration and alertness here beats anything at TRW or on the Street. It's like trying to rescue a satellite—only, all the time, every day, continuously. I'm sure if some of my friends back on the Street, busy trying to put together some deal or other, were to hear me talking like this, they'd say, 'What, are you kidding? That's just clown-

FALL Fiction



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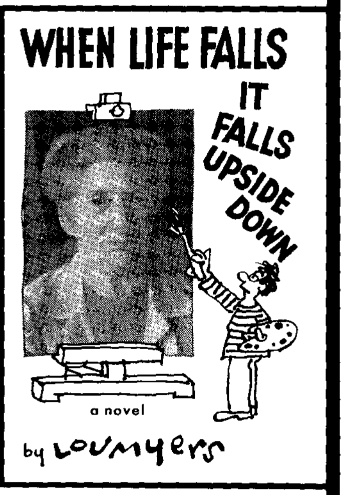

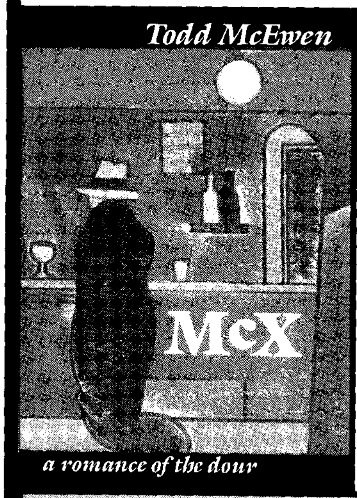
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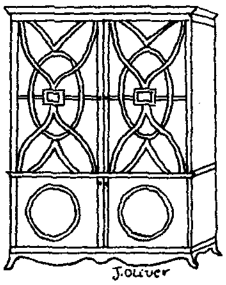
ing.' But the alertness required is continuous. In finance, you take a break, you get help, change strategy—you make a mistake and you lose some money. With the circus, you make a mistake and you could break your neck, or, anyway, give yourself an injury whose effects would linger for years, or give someone else such an injury. It's fun—tremendous fun—but it's very serious work.

"And very dangerous. I don't think I ever realized how dangerous a place the circus can be—and not just for the lion tamers and the trapeze artists but, especially, for the clowns down there on the ground. The fifteen-foot-plank routine we were rehearsing today: the plank's standing there vertical, and then it gets released, it comes slicing through the air, and it's your job to position your body so it grazes just past you, close enough so you can react as if it cracked you straight in the face. Five inches too close and you've got a concussion. Five inches too far away and it's just not funny. Only one inch is funny.



"It's a science, but it's unlike any science I've ever been involved in before. At M.I.T., at TRW, one plus one equalled two, *every time*—that was the basis of the whole enterprise. On the Street, one plus one equalled two even if you were allowed to ignore the fact thanks to accounting procedures—those procedures, at any rate, were governed by strict mathematical relationships. Sometimes you didn't have the figures or the proper models, but had you had them they'd have all added up. Here, who knows what one plus one equals? *Sometimes it equals nothing.* Sometimes a thousand. It's the strangest thing. And yet the master clowns *do* know. They say *this* is funny, *that* is not. And, invariably, they're right. It's a knowledge—it's highly cerebral, it's even technical: it gets honed and honed and honed. Only, it's not analytical, and the kind of analytical thinking I've been used to up to now is almost entirely useless. Once in a while, I still find myself falling back into that old style of thinking. We were working on a stunt today where you fall onto a bunch of balloons and they momentarily cushion your fall as, one after another, they burst, and I was trying to figure out the physics involved—whether it was better for the balloons to be fully inflated or only partly so. It turns out medium is best, for various reasons. If we had a whiteboard I'd show you. But most of the time that kind of thinking is useless; in fact, it just gets in the way. You need a whole different kind of mental agility and conditioning—*tied, of course, to a* tremendous amount of physical conditioning as well.

"Clowns must be *the most* highly conditioned athletes in the world. Their season lasts the year round, and their bodies take tremendous punishment. We were mixing up cream pies today—they're whipped up out of soap flakes. Only lather from soap flakes gives the right consistency. You get that stuff in your eyes and it stings like hell. You're wearing three layers of costume, you're sweating, the makeup is melting into your eyes and making them sting all the more. And you're riding a unicycle. Backward. And sometimes, out on the road, they're doing that sort of thing three times a day."

The strange thing was, it sounded as if Isaacs couldn't wait. For all the moaning and groaning, he sounded as if he had found his heaven and never wanted to leave.

"Yeah," he remarked when I said as much. "Because, beyond all that, it's so much fun. It's so intensely focussed and yet so full of delight. And that's even before you get the audience. With the audience on top of all that . . ."

His voice drifted dreamily on. He spoke of the coming weeks, how on October 13th they would be mounting a gala graduation spectacular—a full-scale extravaganza performance, with family and friends cordially invited, highlighting both individual achievements and the integration of the troupe as a whole. Kenneth Feld, the son of the man who bought the circus back in 1967, and now his heir as the company's president, would be sitting up there in the bleachers. After the performance, Feld would offer apprenticeships to several of the graduates—if past years were any guide, however, to no more than about a third of them. The winners would get to perform with one of the circus's two travelling units over the coming year—a sort of graduate school following the college's

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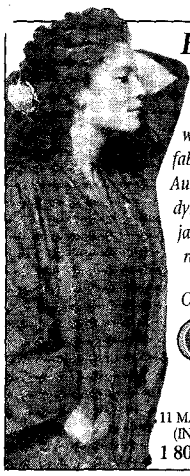

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undergraduate education. After that, if everything went well, they might even get offered regular positions. The competition was fierce, but fiercely sublimated, for one of the things Feld would be looking for, they were continually being told, was evidence of a sense of teamwork, of fellow-feeling.

"We think about it all the time in the back of our minds, I'm sure," Isaacs told me. "But, finally, you have to compete with yourself, and not with others. You have to reach for your own best.

"Oh, I almost forgot to tell you. Remember that variety show we did where I performed my Cheap Bit? Well, the other night, the faculty cancelled the video they'd scheduled for us and instead presented their own variety show—all the bits they do out on the road, truly an awesome display. And then one of them came out with a piece that was introduced as 'An Even Cheaper Bit'—so I got a little nervous. He started out just like me—the sad hungry clown, the near-empty bag, the marshmallow hurled into the sky. Only he hurled his much, much higher, all the way up almost to the rafters. I was getting set to be truly amazed when, suddenly, it turned out that he had a confederate up there in the rafters, and the guy dumped a barrelful of marshmallows—hundreds of them came falling out of the sky all around the stage, and the one he'd actually hurled landed a good twenty or thirty feet away from where he was standing. It was hilarious. I must say, I was sort of flattered."

—LAWRENCE WESCHLER

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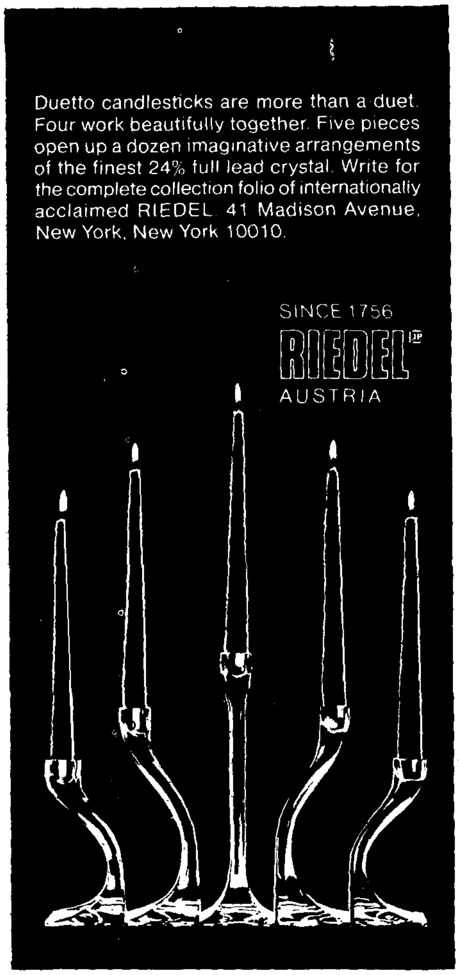

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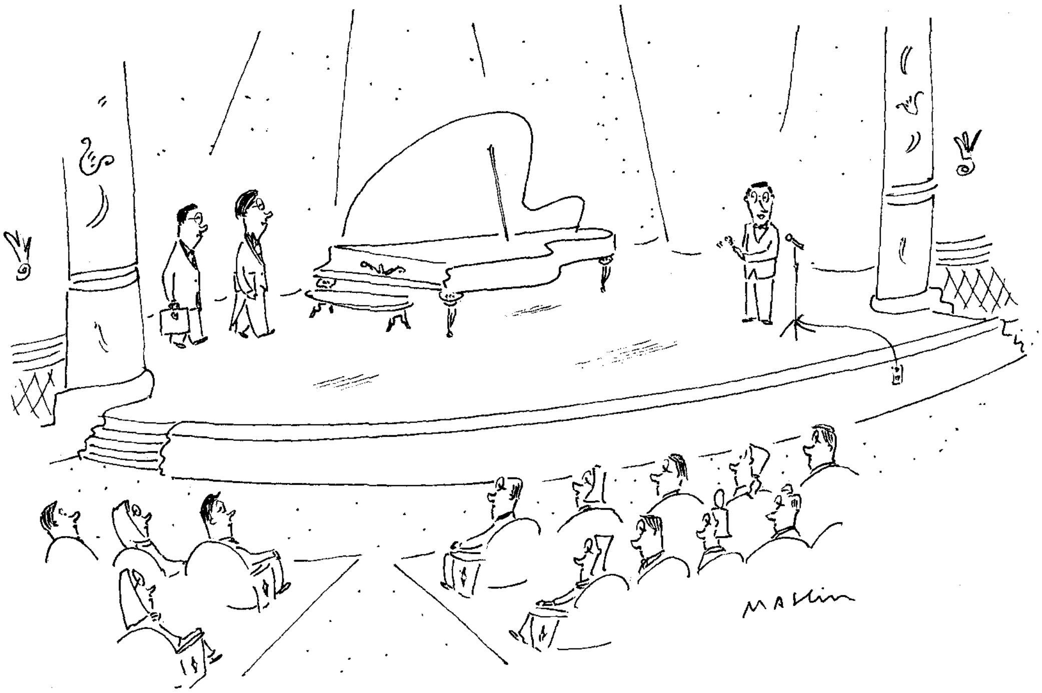
WHEN Anaïs Nin met Henry Miller, in 1931, at her house on the outskirts of Paris (to which Henry had come, in the company of a friend of hers, to get a free meal), she immediately began to turn him into literature. Like everyone and everything else that passed through Nin's life, Miller became part of her diary—a voluminously detailed record of her everyday experience, which she started to write in 1914, at the age of eleven, as a kind of letter to her absent father. By the time she met Miller, the diary had taken on a life of its own, parallel to and perhaps more vivid than the events and feelings it purported to describe; by the time of her death, in 1977, it ran to thousands and thousands of pages. It's a commonplace that Nin's diary, and not the precious "poetic" fiction she also wrote, is her great achievement, the justification of her life as a writer. For her the diary (which she didn't begin to publish until the mid-sixties) seems to have been more than a chronicle, more than a literary exercise, more than a source of material for her fiction. It was the place—maybe the only place—in which she truly lived, because she experienced the world primarily in reflection, with one eye always on the mirror: the clear pool that she wanted not to dive into but to see herself in. Miller enters this strange world, the pages of Nin's diary, like a primitive giant, a mythological force of nature, a King Kong, and her delicate sensibility trembles excitedly: "He is a man whom life intoxicates, who has no need of wine, who is floating in a self-created euphoria. . . . His writing is flamboyant, torrential, chaotic, treacherous, and dangerous. . . . It is an assertion of instinct. . . . He finds joy in everything, in food, in talk, in drink. . . . He is a gentle savage who lives directed entirely by his whims, moods, his rhythms." This forty-year-old writer from Brooklyn, who had not yet published the novels that made him famous, seems to have been everything that Nin herself—a small, fragile, art-worshipping European woman living in the country with her banker husband—was not. "When I saw Henry Miller walking towards the door where I stood waiting, I closed my eyes for an instant to see him by some other inner eye," she wrote, and although she was soon to know this man intimately—they were lovers for a time, and lifelong friends and correspondents—the Henry Miller of Nin's diary is always, at least to some extent, a creature of that magnifying inner eye.

Philip Kaufman's wonderful new film, "Henry & June," shows us Henry (played by Fred Ward) and Anaïs (Maria de Medeiros) in the first year of their acquaintance, the period of their brief, intense love affair. The screenplay, by Kaufman and his wife, Rose, is based almost entirely on Nin's version of events, parts of which Nin suppressed when the diary was first published. (The passages about her physical relationship with Miller weren't printed until several years after her death.) What's unusual about the movie is that it's the love story of two people who are making themselves, and each other, up as they go along: Miller and Nin are at once real people and products of their own imaginations—collaborators in a matched pair of literary myths. Everything that happens in "Henry & June" seems doubled, mirrored, as if it were taking place in some border territory of the mind, half material and half fantastic—somewhere, that is, between the gritty actuality of Miller's vision and the embroidered introspection of Nin's. And the action unfolds in and around a city that seems both itself and a figment of itself: the Paris of the thirties, the land of the expatriate and the dreamer, where people came to breathe the air of art and beauty and to transform themselves into fabulous new beings, wandering innocently in a paradise of self-invention. For Miller and Nin, this place was a laboratory in which they experimented on themselves, partly conscious that that was what they were doing and partly believing that they were abandoning themselves to a larger, deeper external reality. Each needed what the other could give: Anaïs, who cultivated her intricate sensibility like an exotic plant in a hothouse, was fascinated by Henry's earthiness; Henry, who willed himself to live with the simplicity and immediacy of an animal, seemed to feel that he might learn something from Anaïs's more analytic and reflective approach to life. They constantly told each other what great writers they were, and the fact of their obvious differences in temperament must



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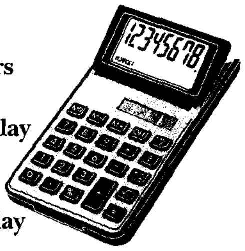

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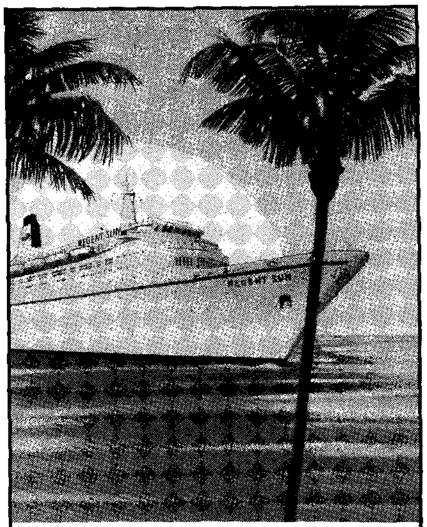
have made the praise sweeter and more convincing. Each was, in a sense, a mirror for the other: looking at himself through Nin's eyes, Henry found a clear image of the "Henry Miller" he was creating in his fiction; reflected in Miller, Anaïs began to define the hyperarticulated consciousness that is the central (virtually the only) character in her diary.

The movie is sympathetic—some might say too sympathetic—to these irritating, remarkably self-absorbed people. Kaufman's films (which include "The Unbearable Lightness of Being," "The Right Stuff," "The Wanderers," and "The White Dawn") have always been distinguished by their respect for exploration, in all its forms, and Miller and Nin were explorers. (And in their writing—Miller's, especially—they provided us with maps for the new territories they'd discovered.) But Kaufman also has the wit to present this odd literary/sexual love affair as a kind of parody image of relationships between men and women. Henry and Anaïs complement each other—they "grow" as individuals—through their affair, but their separate self-realizations are fuelled by lies and evasions and half-truths, and the enduring result of their love is the perfection of two immense and impregnable egos. Kaufman brings out the bizarre, almost monstrous comedy of this relationship. At the frenzied height of their affair, Miller and Nin seem to be feeding on each other, tearing off chunks of each other's personality for the nourishment of their own rapidly expanding—and, of course, literary—selves. Writers coupling don't always make a pretty sight. In "Henry & June," the voracity with which these lovers go at each other is often startlingly, grotesquely funny.

The third major character in the story is Miller's wife, June (Uma Thurman). She's the most mysterious figure here: when she first appears onscreen, she's lit like Dietrich in a Sternberg picture, and she seems to represent, as Dietrich sometimes did, a kind of demonic, annihilating sexual force. When Miller met her, in 1923, he was a wretchedly unsuccessful writer, and she was a taxi dancer who imagined herself a character out of Dostoyevski or Strindberg. Once they were married, she deceived him constantly, humiliating him by conducting affairs with both men and women. And, although she encouraged him to



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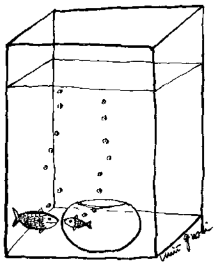
write, she was an ambiguous muse: the money the Millers lived on, and travelled to Europe on, when Henry couldn't sell his work was provided (most likely) by June's sugar daddies, and, on top of everything else, she was witheringly critical of Henry's prose. (She apparently expected him to immortalize her as if she were one of Dostoyevski's tragic prostitutes, and became incensed when he portrayed her instead as an alluring, devious bitch.) Yet he couldn't free himself of her. When Anaïs and June met, the women fell in love. Nin wrote, "June is BEING. Nothing can control her. She is our fantasy let loose upon the world. She does what others only do in their dreams." Nin recognizes June's destructiveness—the diary frequently refers to her as a death force—and she betrays her by sleeping with Henry, yet she remains powerfully attracted to this beautiful, crazy woman, and turns her into literature, too. June dominates the consciousness of both writers, even when Miller and Nin are making love, but by the end she is almost a tragic figure: Miller and Nin seem to have given each other the strength to write her out of their lives, in the most literal sense. The last we see of June in this picture is a fleeting, ghostlike image of a woman in the shadows, watching Henry and Anaïs embrace under a street light; when they look up, she's gone. It's like an exorcism, and, surprisingly, we feel pity for the vanquished demon. June seems somehow more human than Henry and Anaïs, more naked, more vulnerable. Because she isn't a writer, all she can do with her fantasies and desires is embody them in the world, and that leaves her terribly exposed. When Miller and Nin ally their rapacious imaginations against her, she's helpless: they *understand* her out of existence.



The presence of June gives perspective to the story of Henry and Anaïs, which might otherwise seem too hermetic, too fragile. Kaufman gets miraculously intelligent performances from Ward and de Medeiros—they both manage to suggest the nearly inhuman detachment of writers who, even in the midst of passion, are always thinking of how they'll interpret and record their experience—but Thurman gives the picture a jolt every time she appears. The performance is uninhibited yet also weirdly delicate: her June is sexy, touching, and completely mad, all at once. She messes up the yin-yang symmetry of the relationship between Miller and Nin, destroys the illusion—which we're sometimes in danger of surrendering to—that this affair represents some sort of literary or sexual idyll. And she enables Kaufman to keep the movie's form from becoming too tidy. With June either onscreen or hovering in our minds like a nightmare, the material plays as rich, dark erotic farce: it's as if a character from a Strindberg chamber drama had barged into a performance of "Design for Living."

Although the movie's surface is lucidly beautiful (the cinematographer is the superb Philippe Rousselot), and its rhythms are even, almost lulling, its tone is murderously elusive. The characters' motivations are so tangled in imagination and duplicity, and Kaufman's attitude toward the material is so complex and ambiguous, that the picture seems constantly on the verge of losing its balance. This sense of precariousness is part of what makes watching "Henry & June" so exciting, and the stimulating unease carries over into our reflections on the movie after we've left the theatre: we remember it later as if it were a dream whose meaning we can't quite resolve. "Henry & June" creates a world, and Kaufman is both affectionate toward and clear-eyed about the people who live in it. Some of them are silly, like Richard Osborn (Kevin Spacey), a lawyer friend of Henry's who likes to think of himself as artistic: he's always complaining that his work, which no one has ever seen, is being plagiarized by famous writers. Spacey is hilarious in his few scenes: even when he's painted blue, to join an art students' parade through the Latin Quarter, he seems perfectly in character. And others, like Anaïs's husband, Hugo (Richard E. Grant), are pathetic: they bumble through the most complicated situations armed with nothing but vague notions and wan good intentions. The Paris of "Henry & June" isn't Miller's or Nin's but Kaufman's—a place that contains Miller and Nin and also people who are very different from them, all seen from a variety of perspectives. There are

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snippets of films from the period—"Un Chien Andalou," "Maedchen in Uniform," "The Passion of Joan of Arc"—and a sequence of Brassaï (who was a close friend of Miller's) at work, and there are scenes, too, that recall another movie vision of the intellectual adventurers of the first part of the century: Truffaut's "Jules and Jim." For all the disparate material and angles of attack, however, the film has an extraordinary unity of mood. Even the sex scenes—for which the picture has been given the Motion Picture Association of America's new adults-only rating, NC-17—don't stand out from the whole. (These scenes are not particularly explicit, but they are powerfully erotic, in the best way: they show us what the characters are really feeling.)

The themes of this movie are close to those of "The Unbearable Lightness of Being," and its approach to experience is similarly complex, but "Henry & June" is a less expansive work. Its strength lies in its concentration; its pleasures are intimate, like private jokes or family photographs, and its ambiguities are of a rather specialized kind—they spring from the ambiguities of the artist's existence. "Henry & June" is no more, and no less, than a comedy about the duplicity of writers—even, or perhaps especially, with respect to their own lives. Kaufman handles Henry and Anaïs more gently than they handle June: he doesn't understand them to death; he doesn't turn them into literature. It's refreshing to watch a movie that's concerned more with *enjoying* its characters, in all their contradictions, than with explaining them. Kaufman does his subjects the great favor of making them interesting rather than important, and of treating their sense of their own importance as simply an aspect of their natures. The most surprising, and liberating, thing about "Henry & June" is that it shows us Henry Miller and Anaïs Nin and Paris and the mirror world of the twentieth-century artist with an eye that neither magnifies nor diminishes them.

—TERRENCE RAFFERTY

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[*Merlisa Lawrence in the Pittsburgh Press*]

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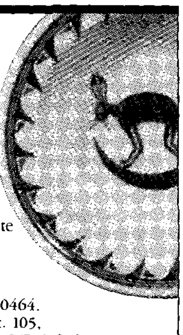

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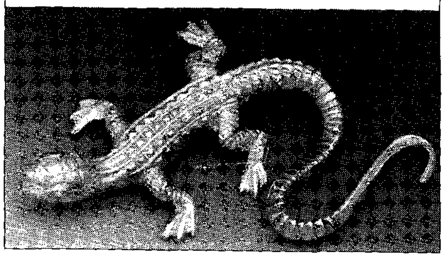


THE DIPLOMATIC ROUND

BUILDING A CAGE

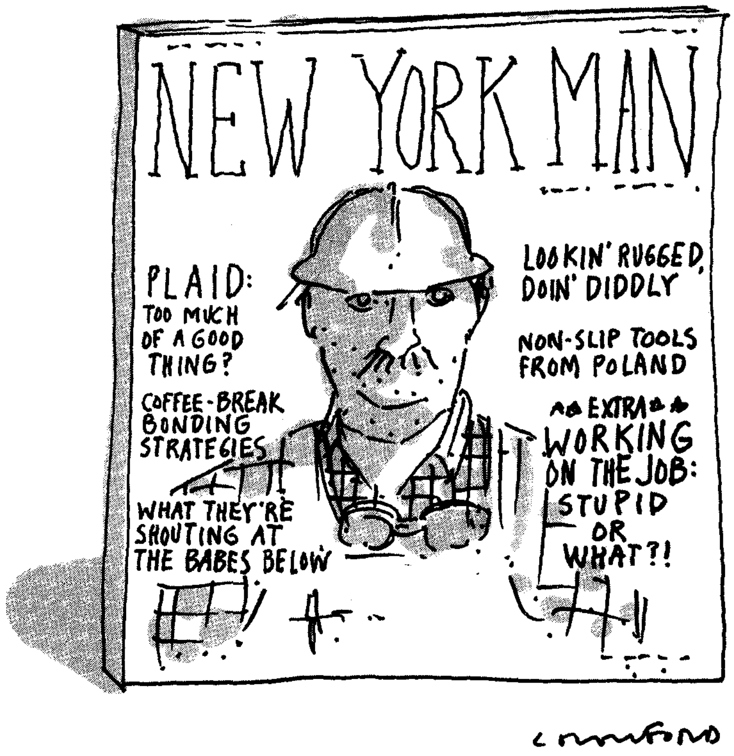
DIPLOMATS look for the glint of opportunity in almost any crisis; its sobering effects may allow, perhaps even dictate, steps that leaders would not or could not otherwise take. The Soviet Union moved Berlin off the boil in October of 1961 after its tanks and American tanks abruptly faced off near Checkpoint Charlie; they had been nose to nose—only seventy-five yards apart—for the first and only time in the Cold War. An actual thaw began a year later, in the aftermath of the Cuban missile crisis.

The ripple effect of Saddam Hussein's coup de main in the Persian Gulf won't be clear for a while, but a consensus of diplomats and specialists involved in the crisis is forming up around these propositions: Nothing will be the same in the Middle East after it is settled, and the biggest winner is likely to be Hosni Mubarak, Egypt's President and Hussein's strongest rival in the region. Hussein aside, the biggest loser is the Palestine Liberation Organization and its leader, Yasir Arafat, who backed the wrong horse. Other losers will be the emirs who rule the oil-producing states along the Persian Gulf; the anachronistic aura of these potentates—their feudal authority and their vast personal fortunes—is becoming unacceptable, and should lead to the enfranchising of these societies and a widening distribution of the wealth. The pressure to use the crisis, once it is disposed of, as a turning point for settling other major sources of instability, including Arab-Israeli differences, is already building. Finally, the situation shows that the United Nations is actually capable of fulfilling its charter: it emerged swiftly as the political bulwark against Saddam Hussein.

Otherwise, not much is clear. The Egyptians, the Saudis, and the Gulf Emirates—the Gulfies, as they are known—favor a military solution, putting a quick end to Hussein and his military machine. Israel has probably lobbied hardest to this end. But the key players, including the United States, the Soviet Union, and the three other permanent members of the Security Council—France, Britain, and China—prefer, in varying degrees, a nonviolent outcome. The question is how to go about achieving one. Does President George Bush, who, aside from Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, is probably the most hawkish of the Five, see the situation as a zero-sum game, meaning that nothing less than Hussein's abject and unconditional surrender of his claims will do, or will Hussein be allowed to make a deal, assuming that he wants one, that would provide him with a fig leaf and provide his all but landlocked country with somewhat greater access to open water, after he has withdrawn from Kuwait? Both views are represented within Bush's entourage. But much of what is being said on and off the record in Washington and London suggests that a diplomatic solution, as it is currently envisioned, would indeed require Hussein to climb down all the way. Many diplomats who follow affairs in the Middle East doubt whether he would do that, even after the sanctions began to pinch. Some diplomats, at the U.N. and elsewhere, take comfort from a line of thinking that is traceable to Brent Scowcroft, Bush's national-security adviser: this first post-Cold War crisis should be a blueprint for the future; America can't resolve it alone, must have help, and will continue to put a premium on coöperation with Moscow and on strict coördination of policy within the U.N.

The future for which the management of this crisis *may* become a blueprint is expected to contain serious conflicts over resources—water, food, and minerals—in various parts of the world. Still, Hussein's ends embody an all too familiar package: resources (money and oil); power; and an improved strategic position. He needed cash to service forty billion dollars in non-Arab debt and to buy the food from abroad on which Iraq is largely dependent. So, in effect, he robbed the bank of Kuwait, a country that earns even more on its investments than in petroleum sales. In doing so, he surprised just about everyone, including the Kuwaitis and the Soviet Union, which until eight weeks ago had been Iraq's great patron.

The Berlin crisis and the Cuban crisis may have contained more alarming implications than this one does, but none of the confrontations of the Cold War were as complex or intellectually daunting as the current crisis, a herald of the new era.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NEITHER Hussein nor most other people expected to see the world community align itself so tightly against him beneath the U.N. banner. Among his major miscalculations was how the Soviets would react to his overboldness. Having noted often and publicly that there is now only one superpower, Hussein apparently wrote them off as

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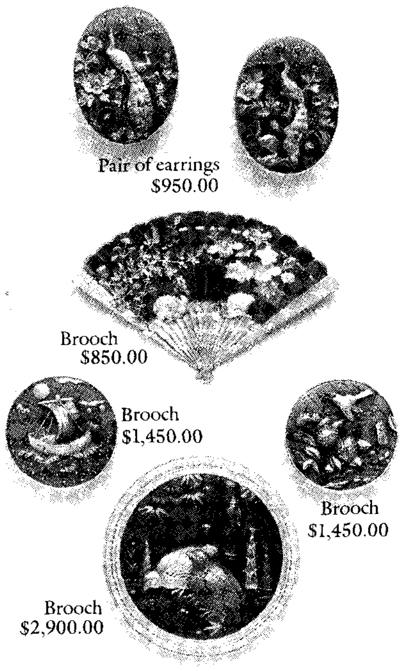

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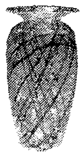

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a serious factor, thereby ignoring the reformation of Soviet foreign policy that has been under way for some time, and includes a stress on close coöperation with Washington. In undoing the past—the failure of socialism and Soviet imperialism—Mikhail Gorbachev needs Western help if the U.S.S.R. is to gain a secure place in the international system, to be treated as a major power, and, above all, to build a modern economy on the ruin of the Soviet experiment. This reversal of Soviet priorities made possible the U.N.'s instant rejection of Hussein's claim to Kuwait. Moscow can no longer manipulate the positions of various Third World countries, but by lining up with Washington it was denying such countries the option of positioning themselves somewhere between rival superpowers, as in the past. Having just one superpower means, then, that the bipolarity is gone. Most countries saw the choice that Hussein had unwittingly offered them—himself or the U.N.—as hardly a real choice. Thus, since August 2nd, the day Iraqi tanks crossed the border into Kuwait, the political action has been concentrated in the U.N. Security Council and in a complementary exercise—regular contacts between Secretary of State James Baker and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze.

For the last two years or so, the Security Council has been on something of a roll. Its Resolution 598 produced the framework for settling the Iran-Iraq War. Namibian independence was thrashed out in the Security Council, and just a few weeks ago Cambodia's four political factions agreed to settle twenty years of on-and-off civil war along the lines of a plan sponsored by the Council's five permanent members. But sanctions, not to mention sanctions with real teeth, are something else. "I've been around the U.N. for twenty years, but never thought I'd see it approving such sanctions," says Abdalla Saleh Al-Ashtal, Ambassador to the U.N. from Yemen, which is one of the nonaligned members of the Security Council. Although his country didn't support the toughest part of the sanctions regime against Iraq, Al-Ashtal, who is highly respected by colleagues, played a very useful role behind the scenes. He and other experienced diplomats agree that the U.N. was set up to allow the five permanent members of the Security

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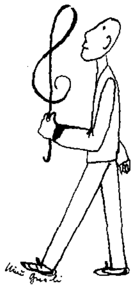
Council—the major world powers—to more or less call the shots. “In the General Assembly, we shout and we condemn, and it doesn’t matter,” Al-Ashtal says.

As the decision-making process within the Security Council has evolved during this crisis, it shows three concentric elements at work: first is the partnership between Washington and Moscow; then come the other permanent members, Britain, France, and China; third is the nonaligned bloc, consisting of seven of the ten rotating members of the council. “The new dimension isn’t just the U.S.-Soviet partnership,” an ambassador of one of the Five says. “The nonaligned members are literally appalled by the possible precedent of a medium-sized power’s devouring another country. They feel very threatened. All this”—the U.N. coalition—“will hang together, because no one is motivated to go outside the consensus.”



“It’s all U.N.-speak now,” another ambassadorial member of the Five says. “After these resolutions on sanctions and on enforcing them, the U.N. cannot be ejected from the central role it has acquired. It is the chosen instrument of the Americans, the Russians, and other key players.” According to a member of the nonaligned bloc, only the Latin-American countries are unhappy with the Security Council’s late-blooming coherence. “They worry that the U.S., the primus inter pares, will use the Council to push them around,” he says.

The first resolution, No. 660, which called for Iraq’s immediate and unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait, shot through the Security Council. The next three also had smooth trips, with Cuba and Yemen abstaining on sanctions against trade with Iraq. Al-Ashtal was uninstructed; Yemen’s President and Foreign Minister pursue different foreign policies, and Al-Ashtal spent much of his time on the telephone, seeking in vain to elicit a position from his leaders. Moscow, however, was the scene for the play within the play. The Soviet Foreign Ministry’s Middle East specialists were reluctant to push beyond a certain point a key client state in which they had made a heavy political and military investment. And as Washington began pressing to put teeth in the trade embargo bureaucrats in Moscow dragged their feet.

The British were being as maximalist as the Americans, and the French, although fairly passive, were firmly aboard. But signing off on an agreement to enforce sanctions did make some of the nonaligned members jittery, and the Chinese positioned themselves squarely against the idea. Still, during four days of discussions in mid-August, it became clear that if Washington and Moscow could at some point agree on a draft the nonaligned group would go along, although not without some effort to soften the language. The Soviets were represented on the Council by Acting Ambassador Valentin V. Lozinskiy, whose instructions were lagging well behind the pace of events. Predictably, a breakthrough was made by Baker and Shevardnadze, who have grown used to disposing of problems—on American terms more often than not. Baker, although he was vacationing on his ranch in Wyoming, seems to have spent a large part of his time there communicating with Shevardnadze. They talked on August 22nd; Shevardnadze agreed to an enforcement resolution, but insisted on delaying matters just long enough to see if Soviet diplomacy could persuade Hussein to withdraw from Kuwait. The *Times* later reported that “an urgent personal appeal” from Gorbachev didn’t budge him. America’s Ambassador to the U.N., Thomas R. Pickering (a widely respected career diplomat), and his British colleague, Sir Crispin Tickell, were already intensifying their lobbying for Resolution 665, which, if it should be approved, would call on members with naval forces to take action “as may be necessary” to “insure” strict compliance with the trade embargo.

Soviet diplomacy did find a way to overcome China’s objection to No. 665, and thereby prevented a break in the ranks of the Five. Any explicit reference to force was unacceptable to the Chinese, so the Soviets suggested replacing the phrase “minimum force” with a turgid mouthful—“measures commensurate to the specific circumstances.” The substitute language, because it didn’t rule out the use of force at any level, was judged by the Americans and the British to have actually strengthened No. 665. No one pointed that out to the Chinese, who would probably have abstained if the alteration had not been made. And in the informal discussion they reluctantly agreed that nothing in the text precluded the use of force if it should become necessary. “Day and night, the U.S.-Soviet alliance flourished, with only occasional small differences on tactics,” one of the involved ambassadors says. “The Chinese went along because they were reluctant to be left behind.” Their fellow permanent members kept the pressure on China, and so did some of the nonaligned ambassadors, one of whom says he told his Chinese colleague, “As a permanent member, you have no business abstaining. That is a cop-out.”

The last hurdle consisted of amendments that some of the nonaligned members put forward but Pickering, Tickell, and Lozinskiy judged undesirable. The three of them dropped in on a caucus of the Seven and sold their own draft unchanged. At 4:10 A.M. on August 25th, Resolution 665 was adopted, thirteen to zero, with Cuba and Yemen abstaining. The action was without precedent: never had the Security Council sanctioned military force without linking it to a U.N. command. Amid the general satisfaction, a few admonitory voices noted that by actually using the U.N. the big powers had strengthened it functionally but perhaps weakened its standing as a steward for the Third World, which is where most of the dangers lurk.

SADDAM HUSSEIN strikes diplomats as artful but impulsive, as perhaps not altogether sure of what he is doing—often just “trying it out,” changing tactics as he changes clothes. He is keenly attuned to the politics of the Arab world but is otherwise unworldly—a poor judge of where the main political currents are headed and of how best to promote Iraqi fortunes. The war he provoked with Iran brought no gains but did produce half a million Iraqi casualties and all but ruined the country’s economy. By some estimates, the war drained away two hundred billion dollars, and the chance for Iraq to reach a per-capita-income level about equal to that of Europe’s low end. In seizing Kuwait, Hussein surprised the world, which thereupon surprised him with its seamless rejection of his action and his claim. He is believed by most Arabists within the diplomatic community to reckon that time is his ally—that America will tire of the game, partly because the cohesion of the instant coalition that Washington put together will not last long. Here, again, Hussein may have miscalculated: the evidence suggests that the cohesion of his adversaries has actually tightened. Baker told his staff, according to a British diplomat, that the sanctions regime should be sustainable for between eight and fifteen months. If Hussein does manage to exhaust their patience—Washington's, especially—the probable consequences will be literally devastating. Hussein's primitive instincts cloud his judgment. If instead of taking hostages he had released them all, some Americans might have begun to ponder the advisability of fighting a war among whose main goals seemed to be the restoration of a dynasty that denied political rights to sixty per cent or so of its population. But because President Ronald Reagan went to extreme lengths to try to retrieve a handful of hostages, Hussein seems to think that he is sitting on a hostage bonanza. He doesn't understand that eight hostages constitute a human tragedy, whereas a few hundred, or a few thousand, are a statistic. They simply add to his problem.

Hussein might still be able to make a deal that would save his skin and a bit of his face—if, that is, he agreed to withdraw from Kuwait unconditionally but with the expectation that some, and possibly the most important, of the items on his original list of claims and grievances against Kuwait would be satisfied. He is aware that a deal along such lines is available, according to a U.N. official. What he seems not to accept, or perhaps to understand, is the strength of the world community's commitment to Resolution 660.

"There is no give in our determination—ours and increasingly that of the others," a senior Administration official in Washington says. "But, having said that, we and the Kuwaitis have expressed interest in putting back on the table what was there on August 1st. The Kuwaitis have even said that they would put the land dispute into neutral arbitration, possibly with the International Court of Justice. We are neutral in this dispute"—between Iraq and Kuwait. "We've said this to the Iraqis in diplomatic channels. We've said it to Mubarak. The restoration of the

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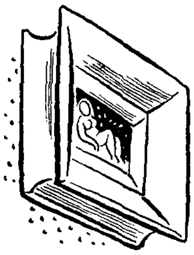
status quo ante is a consistent position of ours. But we've seen no interest on his part."

The Kuwaitis might have tried buying off Hussein with cash; not suspecting his intentions, they stiffed him on the territorial issues. Aside from being strapped financially, however, Hussein's real preoccupation—hardly novel for an Iraqi leader—was and is access to open water. The issue of who controls the Persian Gulf is ageless; it is the leitmotiv of this crisis. Hussein has maritime ambitions, and he also wants to deny his enemies, notably Iran, the ability to bottle up his ships. During the war with Iran, he asked Kuwait to turn over two islands—Būbiyān and Warba—adjacent to the channels that give Iraq its limited access to the Gulf. Warba is a tiny and useless mud flat. Būbiyān, the one he really wanted, is also a mud flat, but it is larger, constituting about ten per cent of Kuwait's land surface, and it has obvious strategic importance. Hussein worried that Iran might enclose him by seizing and fortifying Būbiyān. That didn't happen. The Kuwaitis reckoned that leasing the islands to Iraq would be the same as giving them up forever, and they turned Hussein down. They angered him further by drilling oil from an Iraqi field called Rumaila, a small part of which lies on the Kuwaiti side of the border. Rumaila has about a fourth of Iraq's known oil reserves. Iraq has sought ownership of the entire field, and the Kuwaitis argue that they were merely asserting their right to take oil from some part of it. (If, instead of seizing all of Kuwait, Hussein had occupied just the two islands and the last bit of Rumaila, not much would have happened: the Kuwaitis would have made a fuss; others, while deploring the high-handed gesture, would have begun to see Hussein in a clearer light, and perhaps would have taken steps to contain him.)



At the start of the crisis, diplomats at the Security Council and in various capitals could see the deal in outline. After withdrawing, Iraq would negotiate with Kuwait and possibly acquire Būbiyān and the rest of the Rumaila field. The Al-Sabahs, Kuwait's ruling family, would return but confront a U.N.-sponsored plebiscite on the sort of government their country should have. Last winter, thousands of Kuwaitis tried in demonstrations to persuade the Emir, Sheikh Jabir Al-Sabah, to resume governing according to the country's constitution of 1962 and to revive the currently suspended National Assembly. Of late, the Crown Prince, Saad Al-Sabah, has been saying that all Kuwaitis are loyal to the Emir. Perhaps, the diplomats say, but the Al-Sabahs should let their subjects register a choice.

Some specialists doubt whether Hussein will think seriously about a deal unless or until he stops deceiving himself—recognizes how really alone he is. In August, he tried to bring Iran over to his side in the struggle by giving up control of the Shatt-al-Arab waterway—Iraq's sole territorial gain from the war. This gambit was a predictable bust. In early September, he dispatched Tariq Aziz, his Foreign Minister, to Moscow on a mission impossible aimed at dividing the Soviets from the Americans. One wonders how Hussein's desperate diplomacy is viewed by his senior officers.

Hussein's formal annexation of Kuwait in mid-August contained one possibly revealing feature: he turned most of Kuwait into a new province, called Saddamiyat Mitla; however, the portion of the Rumaila oil field that is in Kuwait, together with an adjacent strip of borderland called Metla, and Būbiyān Island were assigned to Iraq's Basra province. "The distinction is important," a representative of a member of the nonaligned bloc says. "They are separating their real claims from what they are prepared to give up."

Hussein's legal case for Kuwait's belonging to Iraq is preposterous; the traditional Iraqi claim never did cover the whole of the country. But the part of the claim that has some merit covers the Rumaila-Metla strip, which during the Ottoman Empire was part of Basra and which Hussein has now attached to Basra. The expectation is that if negotiations should occur Kuwait would yield on a few of the items of greatest importance to Iraq. "We do not want to reward aggression," a senior American diplomat says. "But the Iraqis should have the right to a negotiated solution of their problems."

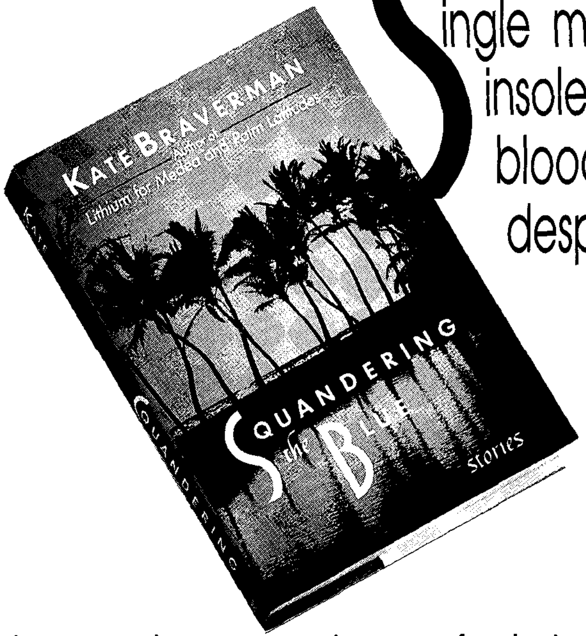
Assurances of this kind do not have

an altogether solid ring. One is also hearing that not only must Hussein fail but he must be seen to fail. A deal that restored the status quo ante but gave him a long-term lease on Būbiyān and the whole of Rumaila might prove hard to equate with abject failure. Increasingly, the Saudis, the Kuwaitis, the Egyptians, the Gulfies, and others would find a nonviolent outcome acceptable only if Iraq also agreed to rid itself of chemical weapons, abolish its research on biological weapons, and accept limits on its armed forces. The chances of Hussein's agreeing to any of that—unilaterally, at least—seem hardly worth discussing.

The alternatives to a political settlement appear to be war and, less likely, a playing out of the "silver bullet" scenario, in which Hussein is bundled off to Paradise by mutinous officers—the normal course of political succession in Iraq, a country that pioneered the military coup. "These sanctions are remarkably effective," a senior Administration official says. "When they begin to affect his political calculus, he will also have begun to worry about what is going on beneath him that he doesn't know about." The Kuwaitis and the Saudis have plenty of incentive as well as plenty of money to bankroll multiple anti-Hussein operations, but he has a lot of experience in squashing plots (real and imagined) against his person, and Iraq is probably the world's most tightly run police state.

Making war against Iraq is a distinctly unattractive option—at least, for those who would bear the major responsibility for fighting it. Some senior military people have been talking on background—and even on the record, in one case—about waging an essentially aerial war in which America's technological edge would produce a quick end. Much or most of this talk probably is aimed at intimidating Iraq's political-military establishment. More cautionary voices, in and out of the Pentagon, dismiss the talk of a "clean, surgical campaign" as just that—talk. The war, they say, might well be short, but, like most wars, it would certainly be messy—very messy.

The rhetoric about inflicting severe pain on Iraq is being studiously moderated in some quarters. "There has been no high-level consideration of other than peaceful outcomes so far," a senior Administration official says. And many diplomats expect that the pressure to



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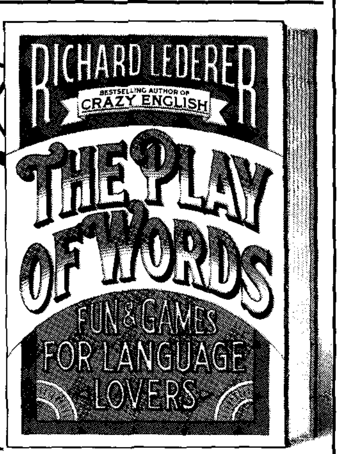
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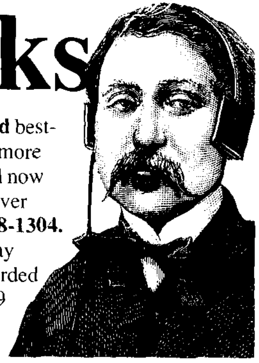

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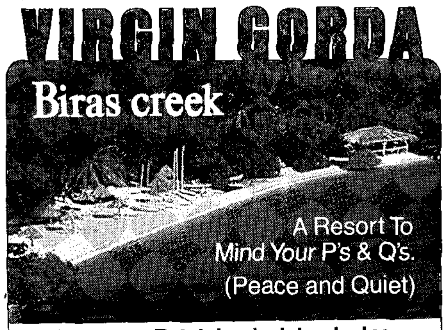
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settle peacefully will grow. A few of them see the tough line that has been taken by the Saudis and the Egyptians as bound to soften. (Hussein expects that, too.) Although an "Arab solution" would be the only good outcome for several of the Arab players, the term itself begins to sound like an oxymoron; rarely has the Arab world been more divided. Some diplomats see the Soviet Union in the person of Shevardnadze as best suited to the role of mediator, or emissary, when, or if, the moment for that kind of thing arrives. Gorbachev's writ may not run very far beyond the walls of the Kremlin, but the Soviet Union does nonetheless occupy a unique position. It, too, sees the crisis as a testing ground in a new and different era. It is the only major power that has good relations with both Iraq and the United States. It is for now the second most important member of the Security Council, and could be asked to speak for the most important member. Bush has invited Gorbachev back into the Middle East peace process. The Soviets can already take much, if not most, of the credit for moving Syria away from its extremism and isolation and into the position of a neo-moderate. They control the rhythm of emigration of Soviet Jews to Israel. Shevardnadze, a figure of considerable lustre and credibility, could at the appropriate moment tell Hussein that war was coming; that, while Moscow didn't want war, it would have to support the Americans and could do nothing to protect Iraq; that there was still time to settle the affair in a way that would fetch Hussein a decent return on his reckless gamble. (Shevardnadze said some of this in his recent U.N. speech.)

Another worry of diplomats at the U.N. and in Washington is the prospect of war by inadvertence or third-party provocation. Although the forces on either side of the Saudi-Iraq border seem to be bent on avoiding incidents, a vast amount of force has gathered in a small area. The third party that most worries diplomats is Israel, and Washington bluntly warned Israel at the outset against attacking Iraq or taking any action against Jordan. Or, to cite another worst-case contingency, Hussein might attack Israel, as he is threatening to do, or achieve the same effect by moving into Jordan. Besides denying Bush the initiative, such a move would throw the Arab world into turmoil and probably shatter the coalition that Bush has created.

If the crisis is settled peacefully, a cage will have to be built around Saddam Hussein—a cage that looks like one to neighboring states. Baker has talked about a regional security structure, but *no one* knows yet what form it might take, and there are broad differences over how much American force should be left behind. Clearly, there will be a large American naval presence in and around the Gulf. And, clearly, the U.N. will have a major peacekeeping role. The Administration is said to favor a blue-helmeted force composed of troops from a group of Arab and other Islamic states; it would function as a trip wire. But some U.N. officials, aware that Arab confidence in their organization isn't high, would like to augment such a force with military teams representing the five permanent members of the Security Council and backed by five-power guarantees. The idea is that if Hussein is to be left with his military power intact he should be far less able to use it and to throw his weight around in other ways.

As diplomats and other officials at the U.N. try peering into the mist, they talk about the need to promote stability in the Middle East, starting, possibly, with a regional-development scheme (a kind of Marshall Plan) and complementary political reforms. Also envisioned is an American-Soviet-sponsored peace conference involving Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Israel. The Golan Heights would be on the agenda, and so would the Palestine problem. (David Levy, Israel's Foreign Minister, has said that his government would negotiate with Syria—a statement drawing an odd distinction with the P.L.O., which Israel has always refused to talk to.)

Thinking about what can be done after the crisis is demanding, but less so than figuring out how the world community is to get from the square it is on to an acceptable settlement of its quarrel with the century's most conspicuous odd man out. Washington's options—*those we can see*—constitute a dilemma: crush Hussein in a bloodletting or help orchestrate a peaceful settlement that might not affect a large part of the problem that he poses. Iraq's people confront a prospect that is far worse: prolonged suffering or ruinous war, or both. —JOHN NEWHOUSE

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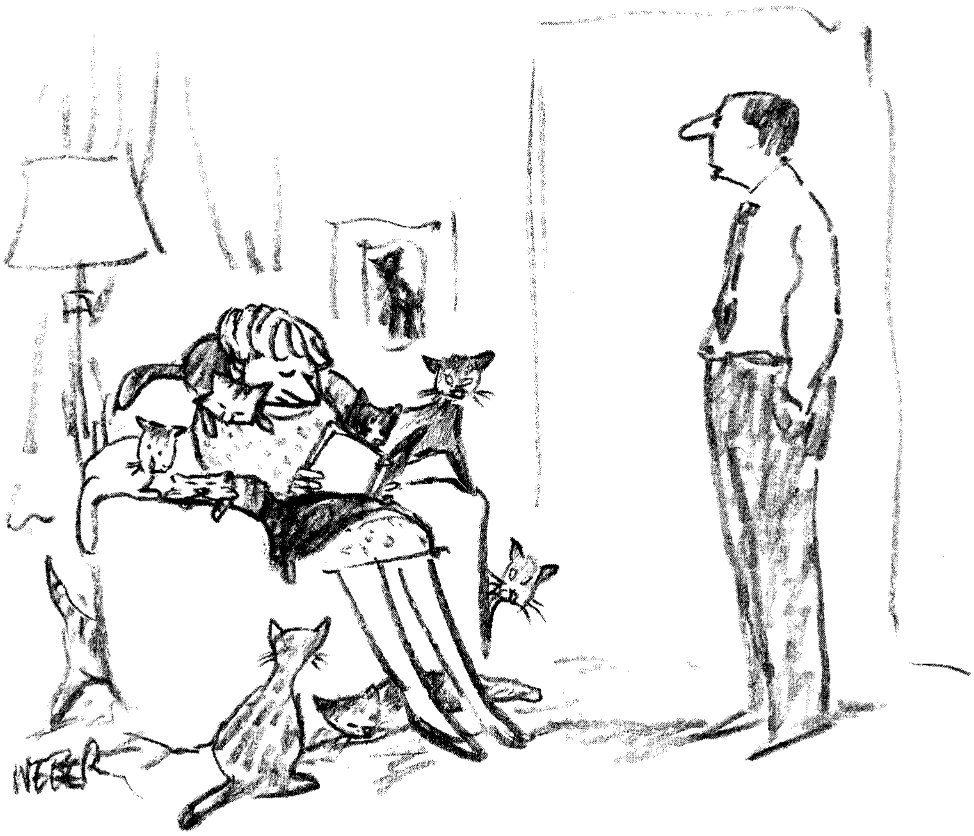
AROUND CITY HALL

Downhill

SOMEONE observed a year or so back that those who relied on the banner headlines in the three local tabloids—the *Daily News*, *Newsday*, and the *Post*—might conclude that there were only eight or nine people in New York, or only about that many whose lives were worth attending to. In the newsworthy inner circle—according to a wholly unscientific study—were Donald Trump, George Steinbrenner, Ivan Boesky, John Gotti, Mike Tyson, and the Reverend Al Sharpton, along with New York's three most powerful politicians: the mayor of the city, the governor of the state, and, of course, John Cardinal O'Connor. Although all these members of the super-headliners' club were men, it was noted that women did rate the big headlines here from time to time, and that one way they qualified, at least on a temporary basis, was by going on trial for some heinous (or, at least, felonious) crime in a local court of law. Male headliners may appear on the tabloid front pages under their last name, their first name, or, no matter how elevated their station, their nickname. "DAVE, DO SOMETHING," the fervid plea on page 1 of the *Post* early in September, was directed at New York's Mayor David Dinkins, who on being sworn in, last January, became a super-headliner ex officio, replacing his predecessor, Edward Koch (who now generally gets the smaller-type, deep-inside-page treatment, except, on occasion, in the *Post*, for which he writes a weekly column). Women headliners might as well not have last names: consider Bess, Leona, Imelda, and two who joined them last winter—Ivana and Marla.

In recent weeks, however, local headlines concerning events in the lives of the rich or otherwise famous were taking up less and less space on the front pages. It was as if the city had changed, turned more serious. Granted, in some cases the recessional was inevitable. For example, George Steinbrenner, formerly featured in "GEORGE MUST GO!" headlines, had, in fact, gone, presumably taking with him the sign on his desk that read "LEAD, FOLLOW, OR GET THE HELL OUT OF MY WAY." From the almost palpable anger directed at Dinkins by some New Yorkers over what they considered an unduly low-key response on his part to the recent surge of crime in the city he is in charge of, it appeared that, despite Steinbrenner's unpopularity, there might be some sneaking admiration here for the Yankee owner's approach to leadership. Headlines concerning Ivan Boesky and whether he would somehow succeed again on Wall Street, having served his time for a crime in which it was only money that had been lost, seemed to be of less interest nowadays to New Yorkers who were getting the impression from other daily headlines that it would be a miracle if they made it home safely that night. As for the Reverend Al, a few weeks ago he announced that he had moved to New Jersey—a piece of news that could be welcome to city budget experts now beating the bureaucratic bushes for money to pay for five thousand policemen (beyond the present twenty-six thousand), who many people have said are needed to deal with the crime epidemic. Sharpton-led marches last summer cost the city eight hundred and fifty thousand dollars in police overtime. In a late-August demonstration that shut down the Statue of Liberty (the comedian Jay Leno suggested that, in response to the crime wave, the statue should now have *both* hands up), Sharpton assailed one more time what he declared to be a total lack of racial justice in America's legal system, a complaint that aroused less sympathy than it otherwise might have if the city were not preoccupied with the deaths of so many innocent people of all races, for whom there had surely been no justice.

Lately, the front-page headlines have featured the names of people New Yorkers had never heard of until they died violently, often, it seemed, for no reason except that someone else had a weapon in his hand. Sometimes the headlines were made up of numbers: hour-by-hour, even minute-by-minute, records of people killed on a given day. In the twenty-four-hour period ending at 8 A.M. on Friday, September 21st, fourteen people were murdered in the city—the kind of local condition that had led to the "DAVE, DO SOMETHING" headline. "THE FEAR IS REAL" was a mid-September headline in the *News*, which reported police figures indicating that there would be more than twenty-one hundred homicides



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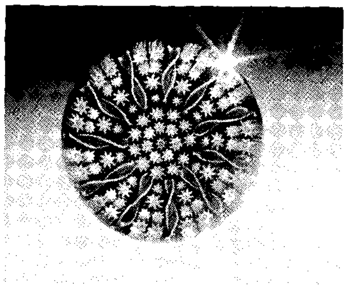

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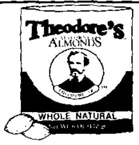

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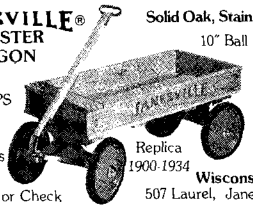

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here this year. (It didn't help friends of a person suddenly dead on some sidewalk that in Washington, D.C., which has twice as many policemen per capita, the murder rate is three times as high.) National commentators set up a kind of chant, declaring New York to be rotten, doomed, unfit to live in—a city that, according to a poll taken for *Time*/CNN, nearly three-fifths of its citizens (not, to be sure, known for their local boosterism or sunny outlooks on anything) would abandon if they could. Inevitably invoked was the 1981 film "Escape from New York," which showed Manhattan, just seven years from now, populated entirely by madmen and criminals. "It's over for New York," Bob Greene declared, in a syndicated column under the headline "WHERE STREETS ARE PAVED WITH BLOOD."

On the afternoon of September 23rd, a twelve-year-old girl, Laykama Taylor, was killed, apparently by a stray bullet, while she was playing behind the Cypress Hills Houses, a city housing project in the East New York section of Brooklyn. She was the second of two New York children hit by gunfire that day and the twenty-second child shot since July 22nd. Of these, six have died, three of them under four years old. Mayor Dinkins called Laykama "the latest victim of the epidemic of gunfire that is turning our cities into war zones." That same afternoon, Jesse Jackson deplored the violence in this city's streets, for which he did not blame the Mayor. "People must make a moral judgment to stop killing each other," he said. No such judgment saved another victim whose name no one here had heard until September 2nd. That evening, Brian Watkins, a twenty-two-year-old visitor from Provo, Utah, in town with his family to attend the United States Open tennis matches, in Queens, was stabbed to death on a Manhattan subway platform. He died in the course of a robbery by a band of Queens youths, who were in search of cash for a night of fun at Roseland. Their mission accomplished, the accused knife-wielder, Yull Gary Morales, and his companions went off to Roseland, where several of them were later arrested.

IT seems likely that as Mayor Dinkins looks back at his first half year in office he sees it as a shining city on a hill from which his course has

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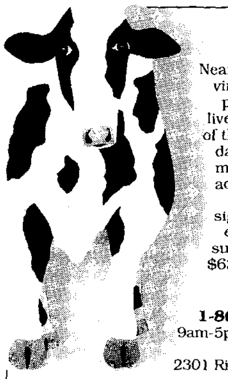

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been downward ever since. Although he rarely engaged in the game of trashing his predecessor—traditionally a new mayor's pastime—the eminently civil Dinkins got credit for offering something very different from Koch's quick, lashing-about, loose-lipped style, which many New Yorkers had grown weary of during Koch's twelve years at City Hall. Dinkins' appointment process, painfully deliberate, was presented as being only prudent and sensible. (He is nine months into his first year, and his cabinet is still not quite complete.) Dinkins' fondness for formal, even natty attire was in strong contrast with the tastes of his predecessor: Koch's aides had found it almost impossible to persuade him into a suit jacket even for the swearing in of judges or the greeting of foreign diplomats. In the days when the outspoken Koch was calling the United Nations a cesspool, and bringing tears to the eyes of visiting Soviet children by telling them their government was "the pits," some people said that it had got so you couldn't take Ed Koch anywhere. From the start, it was evident that you could take David Dinkins anywhere. His tennis playing—an hour and a half early each morning—was, at the start, looked upon as healthful exercise; hadn't Ed Koch worked out for an hour each day? He was praised by the editors of the *Times*—who had endorsed Koch in the primary, on the ground that Dinkins was indecisive—for having, two days after he took office, decisively acknowledged city budgetary strictures and cancelled the scheduled hiring of eighteen hundred new police officers: a decisiveness that the editors have lately concluded is no longer so praiseworthy.

It was in late July that the crime rate rose to the point where Dinkins was forced, in answer to a reporter's question, to deny that New York was turning into Dodge City. Amateur historians, poking around, discovered that Bat Masterson, Dodge City's sheriff in the eighteen-seventies, had spent his last years in this city, as a sportswriter for the *Morning Telegraph*. Irvin S. Cobb, a newspaperman here early in this century, recalled the famous former gunslinger as a figure so mild of manner as to be hardly memorable at all. "Two things betokened the real man: his eyes," Cobb wrote. "They were like smoothed ovals of gray schist with flecks of mica suddenly glittering in them if he were roused"—a sight that, Cobb noted, some of the men who faced Masterson in Dodge City "hadn't lived long enough to get a good look" at. In the courtly Dinkins' early months in office, the only New Yorkers who faced any flecks of mica were City Hall reporters to whose questions he took exception. (They survived.)

During the last few months, just about everything that New Yorkers had publicly admired about their new mayor in his first six months seemed to be held against him. Those who had praised his kinder, gentler City Hall—and, in some cases, come right out and said they had voted for him because he didn't say "I'm mad as hell" a lot—now complained of his failure to say that he was mad as hell about, for example, the growing visibility of homeless people, a looming local recession, and, particularly, the rising number of violent crimes. After a child was shot to death while sleeping in her family's car, the Mayor called the episode "very sad," in tones not much different from those he used to describe the inconvenience of having to close certain highways the next weekend because of construction work. "I am *prepared* to sound angry" was his defensive comment to City Hall reporters who were searching the mayoral eyes for flecks of mica roused by offenses other than their own.

By late summer, Dinkins' attention to his clothes and their care had taken on comic overtones. His fondness for bright-colored baseball jackets turned out to represent not just a pro-sports statement. The jackets are in constant use as he is driven from one appointment to another—worn in place of suit jackets so that the suit jackets won't get wrinkled, even on short trips around town. Jimmy Breslin's comment that "David Dinkins does absolutely nothing but change his clothes" was not, of course, accurate. Still, the frequency with which the Mayor changes clothes and takes showers, in his second office—below the formal one, on City Hall's first floor—does (along with the morning tennis) cut into the mayoral working day and help explain why he is routinely close to an hour late for events listed on his daily schedule. Even after the Mayor arrives, matters usually go slowly, because of his celebrated courtesy. He does not get to the point of a session until he is sure that he has greeted by name all dignitaries who are—or might appear—on the scene. At a joint mayoral-gubernatorial ceremony in late August, Governor Mario Cuomo began by saying, "I thank the Mayor for his graciousness in reciting the names of all but seven people in the audience." It has been Dinkins' custom to spend most of his evenings in a tuxedo; he has four available for banquets, benefits, balls, and other ceremonial events, usually at midtown Manhattan hotels and often involving some special honor paid to him. As a result of the frequency of these events, which he obviously greatly enjoys—sometimes there are five or six a night—four of his police bodyguards have also been fitted out with tuxedos, including cummerbunds, so that they would not seem out of place.

ANTIQUES
Eve Olitsky

The fact that New York now has a mayor you can take anywhere hasn't gratified all of Dinkins' constituents. Last month, Richard G. Carter, a black columnist for the *News*, accused him of spending too much time schmoozing with celebrities instead of minding the store. Commentators have begun portraying him in column and cartoon as a plodding tortoise, impervious to what is going on in the city. In a Bay Rigby cartoon in the *Post*, the tortoise wore a top hat and carried a tennis racquet and a champagne bottle. Beside him, to be sung to the tune of Irving Berlin's "Puttin' on the Ritz," were the lyrics "Have you seen what our mayor will do/At black tie parties on Fifth Avenue/Forget the homeless, drugs and crime/This tuxedoed turtle likes a good old time/I'm afraid it's the pits/ Dave's putting on the Ritz."

EARLY in August, even before the commentaries on the new mayor turned so mean, Dinkins' advisers let it be known that they had suddenly realized the Mayor was leaving himself very little time to spend with the people

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who had elected him—that is, the more rumpled sorts in the streets, rather than the ones who turned up at night in midtown hotels. “He loves being honored, but he’ll probably be honored a little less,” one of the Mayor’s aides said, and added that an altered schedule (which, in fact, he never got around to carrying out) would include impromptu walks through communities. To find time for the locals, he would have had to cut down on travel—he has been making eight or ten out-of-town trips a month. Even when Dinkins was here, he did not always come to City Hall. His absence reminded the regulars there of stories about Mayor Jimmy Walker, who, according to political legend, used to stop by just to pick up his mail. Dinkins’ practice of detaching himself from the hurly-burly, non-ceremonial aspects of New York life has also led, inevitably, to recollections of how Fiorello LaGuardia used to race fiercely about town, covering every fire and anything else that was happening in the city.

By coincidence, last month there was a party to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the first election to the mayoralty of John Lindsay. Though he left office at the end of 1973, Lindsay is only five and a half years older than the present mayor, whom he endorsed in last year’s election. Five hundred people—members of his mayoral staff and other friends—held a reunion in the delegates’ dining room at the United Nations. Their reminiscences about the Lindsay administration’s achievements were no more objective than are those at most sentimental reunions. The entertainment included a number of the-way-we-were commentaries, supplemented by old television clips. There was the jail uprising in the Tombs, when the inmates took guards as hostages, and Lindsay, going to the prison, negotiated a settlement. On the night of a threatened race riot in the East New York section of Brooklyn, after the killing of a black child, Lindsay went to the neighborhood and things calmed down. (One of the leaders of the black protesters was a man named Sonny Carson, who is still active on the local scene.) Others at the party remembered the murder of a young woman in the lobby of an apartment building near Gracie Mansion, and how, when her stricken father flew here from South Carolina, the Lindsay says invited him to the Mansion. Just as mayors have different styles, historians will later deliver different judgments of the value of what any given mayor did, in the short run and in the long run. Even onetime allies may turn skeptical. “If we were so great, how come we screwed up?” one guest at the reunion asked.

Some of those on hand that night, however, were convinced that the city in which most of them still live would be better now if the present mayor gave the impression of being less aloof from some of the bad scenes that New York has faced since he took office, among them the bloody August battle between inmates and correction officers at Rikers Island; the long dispute in Brooklyn between Korean market owners and black protesters, led by Sonny Carson, in which Dinkins acknowledged the wisdom of involving himself directly—of actually going to the scene—only last month, eight months after it began; and the many recent murders, including that of Brian Watkins, which was recounted under the headline “MURDER AND OUTRAGE” in a cover story in *People* (on display at every checkout counter; circulation three million) as “a crime that appalled the nation.”

One of Dinkins’ proudest achievements in his first months in office was his crusade for racial harmony in the city. He urged all New Yorkers to show their support by wearing blue ribbons in their lapels. Few New Yorkers took a public stand against racial harmony, of course. Things got a lot harder for him after local headlines began spreading the word that the city was beset as never before by violent crime (which *everybody* was against) and that the Mayor wasn’t doing enough to stop it. After all, Dinkins had promised in January that he would be “the toughest mayor on crime that the city has ever seen.” Late last month, Richard Carter predicted in his column that unless Dinkins got tough soon he would go down as “the *softest* mayor on crime the city has ever seen,” adding, “Pin a blue ribbon on *that*, Mr. Dinkins!” It was difficult to get the Mayor to focus his attention on the murder of young Watkins, even though the visitor had shared Dinkins’ passion for tennis and, like him, had keenly looked forward to attending the U.S. Open. On the day after the killing, Dinkins told reporters that it was

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION (Required by 39 U.S.C. 3685) *1A.* Title of publication: The New Yorker. *1B.* Publication No. 873140. *2.* Date of filing: October 1, 1990. *3.* Frequency of issue: weekly. *3A.* No. of issues published annually: 52. *3B.* Annual subscription price: $32.00. *4.* Complete mailing address of known office of publication: 25 West 43rd Street, New York, N. Y. 10036-7406. *5.* Complete mailing address of the headquarters of general business offices of the publisher: 25 West 43rd Street, New York, N. Y. 10036-7406. *6.* Full names and complete mailing address of publisher, editor, and managing editor: Publisher: none. Editor: Robert Gottlieb, 25 West 43rd Street, New York, N. Y. 10036-7406. Managing Editor: none. 7. Owner: The New Yorker Magazine, Inc., 25 West 43rd Street, New York, N. Y. 10036-7406. Through intermediate corporations to Advance Publications, Inc.: The Advance Voting Trust, sole voting stockholder, 950 Fingerboard Road, Staten Island, N.Y. 10305. 8. Known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent [illegible] more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities: none. *9.* For completion by non-profit organizations authorized to mail at special rates: not applicable. *10.* Extent and nature of circulation. *A.* Total number of copies. Average number of copies each issue during preceding 12 months 694,090. Actual number of copies of single issue published nearest to filing date 691,175. *B.* Paid and/or requested circulation: *1.* Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales. Average number of copies each issue during preceding 12 months 25,713. Actual number of copies of single issue published nearest to filing date 29,296. *2.* Mail subscription (paid and/or requested). Average number of copies each issue during preceding 12 months 597.141. Actual number of copies of single issue published nearest to filing date 593,373. C. Total paid and/or requested circulation. Average number of copies each issue during preceding 12 months 622,854. Actual number of copies of single issue published nearest to filing date 622,669. *D.* Free distribution by mail, carrier or other means, samples, complimentary, and other free copies. Average number of copies each issue during preceding 12 months 15,079. Actual number of copies of single issue published nearest to filing date 15,039. *E.* Total distribution. Average number of copies each issue during preceding 12 months 637,933. Actual number of copies of single issue published nearest to filing date 637,708. *F.* Copies not distributed: *1.* Office use, left-over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing. Average number of copies each issue during preceding 12 months 9,124. Actual number of copies of single issue published nearest to filing date 8,828. *2.* Return from news agents. Average number of copies each issue during preceding 12 months 47,033. Actual number of copies of single issue published nearest to filing date 44,639. *G.* Total. Average number of copies each issue during preceding 12 months 694,090. Actual number of copies of single issue published nearest to filing date 691,175. *11.* I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.

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"a sad event" but one that they should put "in perspective." Then he moved into his standard latest-local-crime speech, in which he assails the governments in Washington and Albany for not having stronger gun laws, and for their inadequate anti-drug laws. However, as far as was known, the young men arrested in the Watkins case had not been on drugs, and Watkins had died not of a gunshot but of a knife wound. Soon afterward, Dinkins left City Hall for Queens and the Open. His press spokesman had explained that he would be "tennis-oriented" during the two weeks of the tournament, and, indeed, he was out at the stadium most days, several times travelling by one of the police helicopters, which are presumably kept at the ready in case of emergencies. New Yorkers on the scene or watching the matches on television could see the mayor of this deeply troubled city sitting there hour after hour, his eyes riveted on what was happening on center court. From some remarks he made later, the suspicion could have arisen that his lack of dramatic response to Watkins' death might mean that he shared the view of some New York blacks and Latinos that the crime had got far more than its proper amount of attention in view of the attention paid to the deaths of most black and Latino men in this city. The coverage of crime, however, is not subject to strict equal-opportunity rules. Moreover, Dinkins had frequently pointed out that his interest in the U.S. Open was based not on his love of tennis but on local economic interests: the tournament was said to be worth a hundred and ten million dollars annually to the city treasury. If word had not yet reached other parts of America—and other parts of the world—that visitors might be taking their lives in their hands if they came here, the Watkins murder delivered the message. Howard Rubenstein, a local public-relations man, estimated that Watkins' violent death set back tourism in New York at least five years. Since Rubenstein is a formal and informal adviser to many local politicians, including Dinkins (not to mention George Steinbrenner, Donald Trump, Leona Helmsley, and, for that matter, Roseland), it was a fair bet that other P.R. men would judge this to be an understatement.

In commenting on Watkins' stabbing, Dinkins said—and his words

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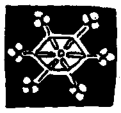
went out all over the country—"It could have happened anywhere." A cartoon a few days later in the Salt Lake City *Tribune* showed the Mayor saying "Hey, it could happen anywhere . . . Kuwait . . . Beirut . . . Liberia." Dinkins did not attend the Watkins funeral, but he did send a deputy mayor. The day before the funeral, he was at the University of California at Berkeley, where he spoke at the opening convocation. A reporter, noting that he had been able to make that trip, asked why he had not gone to Provo. "One cannot go to the funeral of each victim," the Mayor said. He had made the trip West even though there had been some doubt among his advisers about the wisdom of his travelling to California just at this time, considering how things were going in the city and also the scheduled topic of his speech—"The Future of Urban America."



During last year's mayoral campaign, Dinkins was widely admired for never having suggested that his opponents' criticism of him was racially based. Then, a few weeks ago, he gave an interview in his office to two black reporters for radio stations that have predominantly black audiences. Of the comments about his attention to clothes he said, "Some people think that with respect to those of us who are African-American it's somehow or other inappropriate to dress well." He added, "I suppose some folks are so used to seeing us in dungarees and overalls—you know, out on the plantation or something." It is getting on to half a century since the great wave of black farm workers came up from the South to work in the defense plants, and if they wore overalls so, often, did the Southern whites who moved northward in that period for the same purpose. Dungarees are the most stylish attire for many whites *and* blacks, though not, of course, for the Mayor. In another comment that did not seem quite fitting for someone who had chided his fellow New Yorkers for failing to support his program of promoting racial harmony, Dinkins, speaking of the crime situation, told the black reporters, "You are aware that problems of crime and violence in our community"—he meant the black community—"are not new. We've had this problem, and now I guess it has gone beyond our borders, and others have become concerned." Yet the view that whites do not care about crime until it reaches white neighborhoods is not entirely valid. One reason that New York began to be compared with Dodge City this summer was the killing of so many little kids—a *Newsday* front-page headline was "SLAUGHTER OF THE INNOCENTS"—and this led historians to point out that at least in Dodge City they didn't shoot down children. Virtually all twenty-two of the children wounded or killed here by stray gunfire recently were black or Latino. It was the senselessness, the randomness, of so many of the deaths of New Yorkers of all races that made the last few months in this city a time most people here will wish they didn't have to remember.

In very recent days, there have been a few signs that the belief here that the city is a war zone in which crime is out of control is easing somewhat. For one thing, some of the old headlines are coming back. "NOW THE DONALD WILL SQUEEZE HIS PEACH IN PUBLIC" read one on Trump's new decision to make public appearances with Marla, a Georgia girl. It was not clear whether he was doing this on the advice of Rubenstein, his P.R. expert. There is little doubt that Rubenstein has been a strong influence lately over the day-to-day schedule of the Mayor's office, having been brought in in response to a true emergency: a *Newsday* poll published on September 28th showed that between June and September Dinkins' approval rating had fallen among New Yorkers from fifty-three to thirty-eight per cent, while forty-three per cent of them disapproved of the way he was governing the city, compared with twenty per cent three months ago. Suddenly, Dinkins has eased off on the helicopter trips and some of the grand dinners and has been moving about the city among old people, cops on the beat, children in hospitals—Mr. Common Folk himself. A Bay Rigby cartoon on the mayoral transformation was not respectful: it showed the tortoise representing the Mayor looking smaller and meeker than ever as he was led around on a leash by a large, very determined-looking Rubenstein. The Mayor's people have pointed out lately to anyone who will listen that in the old fable—though it was a long and painfully slow trip—it was the tortoise who won the race.

—ANDY LOGAN

BOOKS

BRIEFLY NOTED

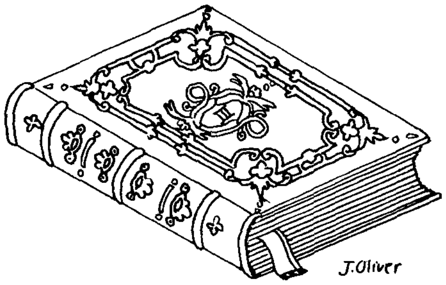
FICTION

The Animal Wife, by Elizabeth Marshall Thomas (Houghton Mifflin; $19.95). A continuation of the profound portrait of human culture in the Paleolithic period that the author began with her first novel, "Reindeer Moon." Whereas the earlier tale was told through the words of a memorable female protagonist, this companion novel, set among the same ancestral people, deals with "men's things, strong things, fire things," and is narrated by a man looking back at his passage from adolescence to manhood. Kori was raised by his mother and her clan, but as the novel opens he travels to the distant camp of his father's band of hunters to take his place at "the owners' fire." Kori's audacity in the pursuit of game sets him apart, but his pride has not reckoned with the mingled realms of dreams, animal spirits, and kinship obligations, all of which are associated with the claims of women. After he abducts a foreign-seeming young woman who has been separated from her people, Kori begins to learn that his impulsive act will have uncanny and fateful consequences. Ms. Thomas is a brilliant and restrained stylist, and once again she says powerful things about gender without a hint of ideology, and handles the violence and beauty of primitive life with all the narrative verve and none of the sentimentality of Jack London.

A Bottle in the Smoke, by A. N. Wilson (Viking; $18.95). This novel contains a great many cigarettes and a lot of booze—emblematic of its period, the fifties, and its milieu, London's bohemia. In fact, the narrator and protagonist, Julian, works in a pub called the Bottle to support his aspirations as an actor and novelist. There he listens to a pickled former Best Seller discourse on the evils of marriage, and sees them demonstrated by everyone from his landlords to his guardian aunt and uncle and, sadly, himself—when his charmed first year with his wife is broken up by an insidious literary predator known colloquially as Lover Boy. An elaborate design is evident in this second volume of a trilogy that began with "Incline Our Hearts," and involves a play on the idea of biography (Mr. Wilson has written many) and memory, à la Nabokov and Proust. But what is engaging is not the highfalutin concepts so much as the Best Seller, the landlords, the publican (who is a ringer for T. S. Eliot but talks like Sid Vicious), and the childish alcoholic Sargie Lampitt, among others—in short, a cast of bit character players who have in common nasty habits and great pathos.

Boone, by Brooks Hansen and Nick Davis (Summit; $19.95). The premise of this ambitious novel is that Eton Arthur Boone was a seminal avant-garde performance artist/writer/painter/filmmaker in the late sixties and early seventies who died in a motorcycle accident at the age of twenty-seven. It is set up as a collection of transcripts of interviews with those who knew Boone, including his estranged father, his promiscuous stepbrother, the manager of Jes' for Laffs (where he did his famous scathing impressions of personalities like Janis Joplin and Jack Kerouac), and various editors, directors, and writers who are obsessed with his life and work. It is hard to call any of these people Boone's "friends": he is portrayed as being above and beyond such earthly relationships. The authors succeed in evoking the tangled emotional and professional network that surrounds their subject, but in the end the slippery Boone eludes us. We only hear his words secondhand, and the brilliance of the excerpts from his writings is inevitably limited by the imaginations—however lively—of the two first novelists behind this hall-of-mirrors project.

In the Blue Light of African Dreams, by Paul Watkins (Houghton Mifflin; $18.95). In his first novel, Mr. Watkins imagined the disenchanted life of a young German panzer trooper in the Second World War. Here he moves his imagination even farther back in time—to the middle nineteen-twenties and the disenchanted life of an American First World War veteran serving in the French Foreign Legion in Morocco. There Charlie Halifax and his friend and mechanic, a former Russian aristocrat, dream of winning the Orteig Prize, for the first plane to fly between Paris and New York. Mr. Watkins takes his time, filling in Halifax's past (as a coal miner) and his mechanic's (as a cavalry officer), their workaday life in Mogador under a brutal commander, their complicated preparations for the flight, but he gains depth and stability without in any way slowing his story's powerful thrust.



GENERAL

Reminiscences and Reflections, by Golo Mann, translated from the German by Krishna Winston (Norton; $25). Golo (Angelus Gottfried) Mann was born in 1909, the third of Thomas Mann's six children. He grew up in Munich, studied history and philosophy at Heidelberg (notably under the famous Karl Jaspers), and, with the rest of his family, was forced into exile when Hitler came to power, in 1933. Although his life's achievement is as a historian in the conservative tradition, this extended memoir is subjectively written. He tells us of the years before and during the First World War as they appeared to a boy of nimble, mischievous mind, and re-creates the atmosphere of the postwar era—the time of the Weimar Republic, with its intellectual ferment and artistic innovation, its fumbling and often hysterical politics. He writes warmly of his siblings and of his beloved mother, Katja, and with something less than awe of his world-renowned and rather stern father, whom he refers to as "the old man." This volume ends in 1933, but there are many flash-forwards to life in exile in Europe and America, and one hopes for a sequel.

Faces of Revolution: Personali-

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TIES AND THEMES IN THE STRUGGLE FOR AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE, by Bernard Bailyn (Knopf; $29.95). This collection of essays portrays eight individuals—some famous, others obscure—and examines the ways in which these men of diverse personality, experience, and intellectual tradition affected the course of our Revolution. The author also discusses how the issues between Britain and the rebellious colonies developed; here he pays equal attention to eighteenth-century political theory and American practice. He does not believe that the Revolution was inevitable, and supposes that even without a forcible separation this country was bound to develop as it did. His account of Great Britain's political—more than political, emotional—failure to grasp that the eighteenth century's headlong growth demanded reform and innovation is a chilling portrait of the complacency of a great power.

SHANGHAI, 1949: THE END OF AN ERA, photographs by Sam Tata, introduction by Ian McLachlan (New Amsterdam; $25). This unusual album shows us the takeover of China's greatest commercial city by Mao Tse-tung's troops, during the spring and summer of 1949. Some time before recording this event, the Shanghai-born photographer had met Cartier-Bresson and been influenced by him, and that, along with his native talent, accounts for the immediacy and particularity of these pictures. They show the rather indolent, discouraged troops of Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang hanging around the city waiting for the inevitable; the calm of the populace; and the slow and deadpan manner in which the Red Army took over. There was no atmosphere of victory or conquest; it was Mao's precept that the city was not being conquered—it was being liberated. The book is a historical curio, and something of a find.

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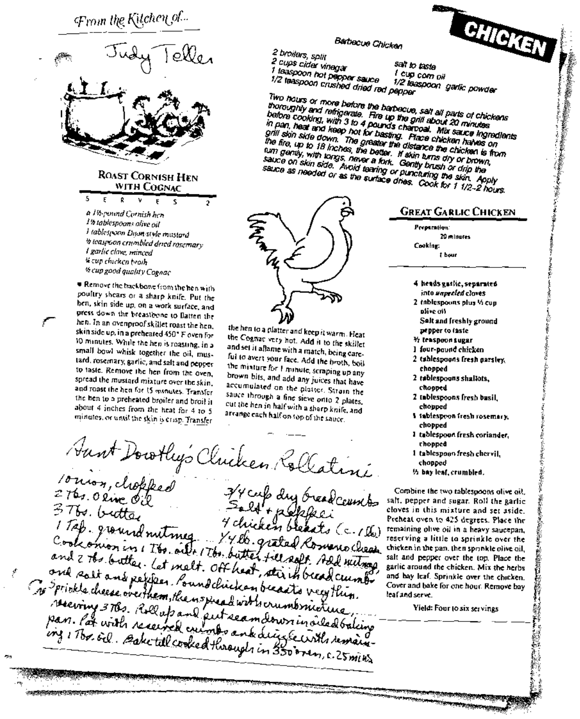

From the Kitchen of...

Judy Teller

ROAST CORNISH HEN WITH COGNAC

SERVES 2

a 1½-pound Cornish hen
1½ tablespoons olive oil
1 tablespoon Dijon-style mustard
½ teaspoon crumbled dried rosemary
1 garlic clove, minced
¼ cup chicken broth
⅓ cup good quality Cognac

■ Remove the backbone from the hen with poultry shears or a sharp knife. Put the hen, skin side up, on a work surface, and press down the breastbone to flatten the hen. In an ovenproof skillet roast the hen, skin side up, in a preheated 450° F oven for 10 minutes. While the hen is roasting, in a small bowl whisk together the oil, mustard, rosemary, garlic, and salt and pepper to taste. Remove the hen from the oven, spread the mustard mixture over the skin, and roast the hen for 15 minutes. Transfer the hen to a preheated broiler and broil it about 4 inches from the heat for 4 to 5 minutes, or until the skin is crisp. Transfer the hen to a platter and keep it warm. Heat the Cognac very hot. Add it to the skillet and set it aflame with a match, being careful to avert your face. Add the broth, boil the mixture for 1 minute, scraping up any brown bits, and add any juices that have accumulated on the platter. Strain the sauce through a fine sieve onto 2 plates, cut the hen in half with a sharp knife, and arrange each half on top of the sauce.

CHICKEN

Barbecue Chicken

2 broilers, split
2 cups cider vinegar
1 teaspoon hot pepper sauce
1/2 teaspoon crushed dried red pepper
salt to taste
1 cup corn oil
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder

Two hours or more before the barbecue, salt all parts of chickens thoroughly and refrigerate. Fire up the grill about 20 minutes before cooking, with 3 to 4 pounds charcoal. Mix sauce ingredients in pan, heat and keep hot for basting. Place chicken halves on grill skin side down. The greater the distance the chicken is from the fire, up to 18 inches, the better. If skin turns dry or brown, turn gently, with tongs, never a fork. Gently brush or drip the sauce on skin side. Avoid tearing or puncturing the skin. Apply sauce as needed or as the surface dries. Cook for 1 1/2-2 hours.

GREAT GARLIC CHICKEN

Preparation:
20 minutes
Cooking:
1 hour

4 heads garlic, separated into *unpeeled* cloves
2 tablespoons plus ½ cup olive oil
Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
½ teaspoon sugar
1 four-pound chicken
2 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped
2 tablespoons shallots, chopped
2 tablespoons fresh basil, chopped
1 tablespoon fresh rosemary, chopped
1 tablespoon fresh coriander, chopped
1 tablespoon fresh chervil, chopped
½ bay leaf, crumbled.

Combine the two tablespoons olive oil, salt, pepper and sugar. Roll the garlic cloves in this mixture and set aside. Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Place the remaining olive oil in a heavy saucepan, reserving a little to sprinkle over the chicken in the pan, then sprinkle olive oil, salt and pepper over the top. Place the garlic around the chicken. Mix the herbs and bay leaf. Sprinkle over the chicken. Cover and bake for one hour. Remove bay leaf and serve.

Yield: Four to six servings

Aunt Dorothy's Chicken Rollatini

1 onion, chopped
2 Tbs. Olive Oil
3 Tbs. butter
1 Tsp. ground nutmeg
3/4 cup dry bread crumbs
Salt + pepper
4 chicken breasts (c. 1 lb.)
1/4 lb. grated Romano cheese
Cook onion in 1 Tbs. oil + 1 Tbs. butter till soft. Add nutmeg,
and 2 Tbs. butter. Let melt. Off heat, stir in bread crumbs
and salt and pepper. Pound chicken breasts very thin.
Sprinkle cheese over them, then spread with crumb mixture,
reserving 3 Tbs. Roll up and put seam down in oiled baking
pan. Pat with reserved crumbs and drizzle with remaining 1 Tbs. oil. Bake till cooked through in 350° oven, c. 25 mins

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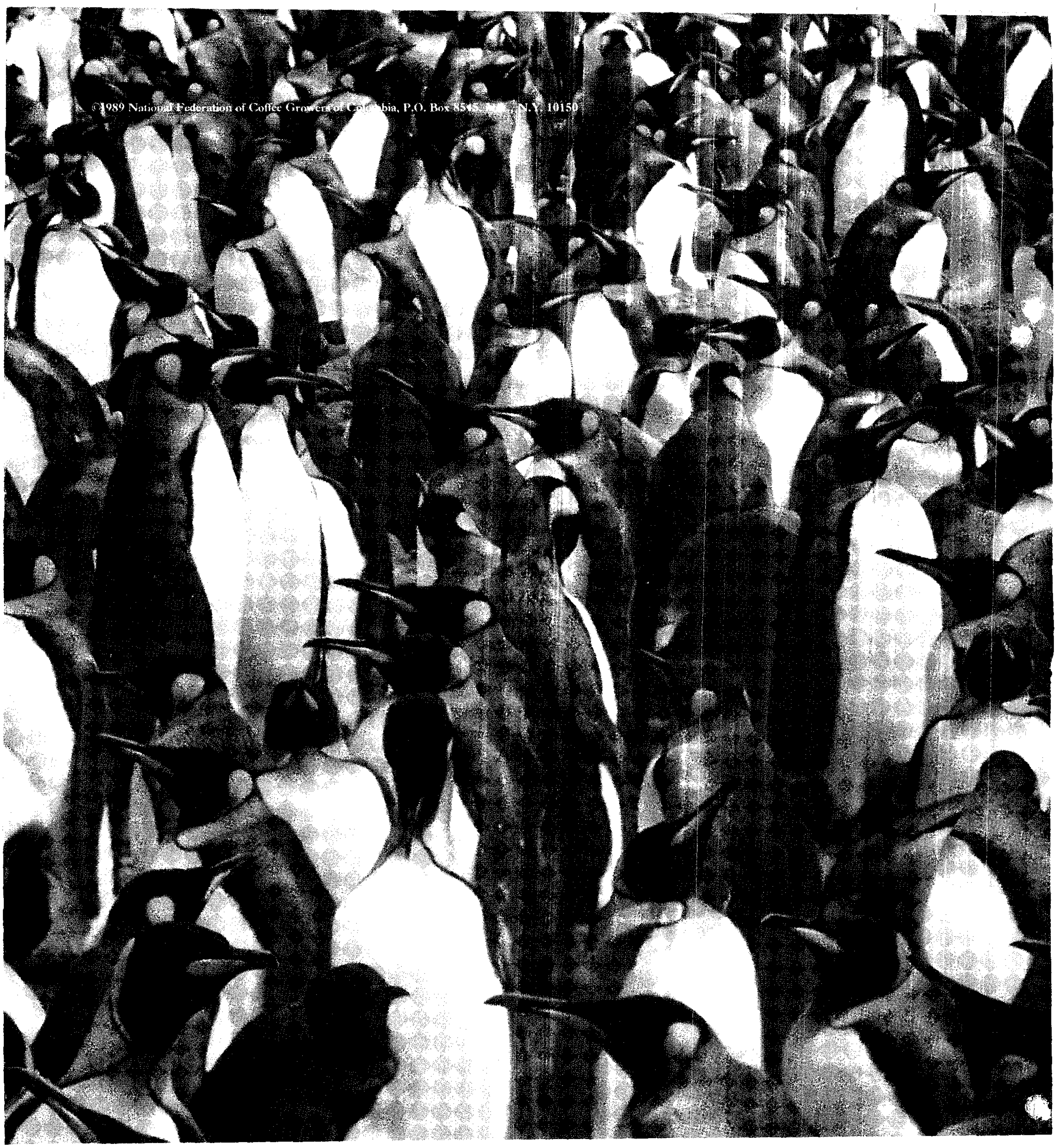

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